

THE
WORKS

OF

THOMAS CHALKLEY

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

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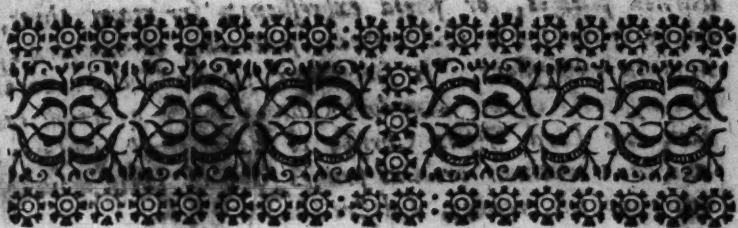
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G O D's great Love unto Mankind, through JESUS CHRIST, our L O R D.

*And there came a Voice out of the Cloud, saying, This
(i. e. Christ) is my beloved Son, hear ye him, LUKE
ix. 35.*

If ye love me, keep my commandments, JOHN xiv. 15.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begot-
ten Son, that whosoever believed in him, might not pe-
rish, but have everlasting life, JOHN iii. 16.*

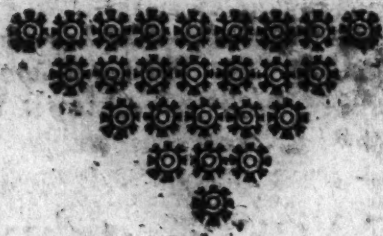
PREFACE to the READER.

IN sincerity, and unfeigned love, both to God and
man, were these lines penn'd: I desire thee to per-
use them in the same love, and then, peradventure,
thou mayst find some sweetnesse in them. Expect not
A 2 learned

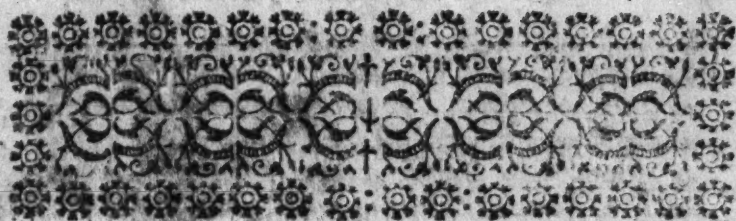
learned phrases, or florid expressions; for many times, heavenly matter is hid in mean sentences, or wrapped up in plain expressions. It sometimes pleases God to reveal the mysteries of his kingdom (through the grace of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ) to babes and sucklings; and he oftentimes ordains praises out of their mouths; one of which, reader, I desire thou mayst be.

MY intent in writing these sheets, is, that they, through the help of God's grace, and the good spirit of Christ, may stir up true love in thee; first to God and Christ, and then, to man: then thou wilt be fit to be espoused to him, which is altogether lovely (that is, Christ) which is the desire of him, that is thy friend, more in heart, than Word.

T. C.



G O D



GOD'S Great Love to MANKIND, &c.

HAVING been concerned for the good and welfare of the children of men in my youthful days, and tasted of the infinite love of God, in, and through his dear Son, the holy Lamb Jesus, who laid down his life for the sins of the world; and, in my tender years, reaped great benefit, through faith in, and obedience unto him: for, truly, I have found, by sufficient experience, that one without the other (*to wit*) faith without works, will not answer the end of the great love of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in that he offered himself a sacrifice for all mankind; not for people to live in sin, but to take away the sin of the world: in a word, *Faith without works, is dead*, James ii. 20. For my part, I found it so, and so must all true believers in the Son of God.

Christ he first loved us, and paid that debt for us, that, of ourselves, we are not able to do. Oh his infinite love! it hath oftentimes melted my soul into tenderness. Methinks it is abundance of pity, that ever the sons of men should requite evil for good, or disobedience, for such gracious obedience: I would to God, that all believers in Christ, would live in the fear of God, and that love to Christ, that keepeth the heart clean; because nothing unclean can enter the kingdom of heaven. I don't mean a slavish fear; but fear, that is wrought by love:
for

2 GOD's Great Love to MANKIND,

for them that love the Lord, the great everlasting God, will fear to offend Him.

This is the matter that chiefly beareth stress on my mind, at this time, the necessity of love to God and Christ, and one to another: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. ii. 9* For my part, I can't pretend to tell thee, O man! to the full; but only a little to hint at it: It is, *Joy unspeakable, and full of glory*: but then we must love him, so as to keep his commandments. This is the work that I am very earnest in pressing people to; whether youth, or aged: it is not too soon for the young, neither too late for the aged, to begin this work of obedience, through faith, and love to God and Christ, if his Spirit is reprovng or striving in them. But it is more honourable and acceptable, for a man to give up the strength of his days to serve the Lord, and to remember his Creator in the days of his youth, before sin is too much rooted and grown in man: for then it will be much more labour, to get the root of unrighteousness plucked up.

So that in that ability which God hath given me, I would endeavour to stir up all to serve him, and to be in good earnest, and not to put the day of God, even the mighty Jehovah, a-far off; but to love the Lord unfeignedly, and with true obedience; since it is that sacrifice, that is only acceptable to God; that is to say, To love him in deed and in truth, more than in word and with tongue: for against such a people the Lord, by his servant, complain'd in old time; *They, saith the Lord, draw nigh to me with their mouths, and with their lips do honour me: but, oh! their great misery was, their hearts were far from him; they did not love him with their whole hearts; that was their great fault: this thing is also a great evil in the sight of the great God, in this*
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our age; and it is too frequent in *England*, the land of my nativity, as also in other islands, and places, beyond the sea. What lamentation shall be taken up, for such as do so mock the Lord, the great God of love? Surely he will render vengeance as in flames of fire upon all the wicked and ungodly, and those that forget him. 'Tis not by saying, but by doing that we are justified, through faith in Christ: not he that saith, Lord, Lord, only; but he that doth his will also, shall enter the kingdom.

Now the will of God, and Christ his Son, is, That we should love him above all; and in loving him, we shall love one another; for Christ saw the great need there was of loving God above all, and also of loving one another; therefore he answered thus to him that asked him, Which was the greatest commandment---*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*, Matt. xxii. 37.

This (says Christ) is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, Verses, 38, 39, and 40.

Now if these two great commandments were obeyed, it would answer God's great love to us, in sending his Son to bless us. O! the glory of God, how it would shine! it would make the young men as valiants of *Israel*, and the old men as captains of thousands; then Christ would reign gloriously indeed, in the hearts of the children of men: here the Lamb and his followers (that walk in the light, and in that commandment that burns as a lamp) would get the victory over the devil and his followers: but, on the contrary, this is the great error of mankind, they talk of God, and Christ, in words; but deny him in works: nay, some will not stick to say, It is impossible to keep the commands of Christ. It is too

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too commonly spoken, and also believed, That there is no perfection on this side the grave, contrary to the saying of Christ, *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect*, Mat. v. 48. Yet, say they, it is impossible; which is as much as to say, Christ is a hard master, in commanding what cannot be done; consequently, out of their own mouths, they will be condemned; for Christ is not a hard master. I testify against all such unholy and imperfect believers in solid fear before the Lord; but according to such peoples faith, and belief, he must needs be hard. O that people would but so love God, and his dear Son, as to strive to do his commands; for it is impossible they should obey, if they do neither believe, nor endeavour: but let such know, That *many shall strive and shall not enter*; much less, *enter*, if they do not *strive*: but we must, of necessity, *strive*, in obedience to his will, and by his assistance (not in our own natural wills) *to enter in at the strait gate*: man would enter in with all his pleasant things, and in all his bravery, and gallantry; but God's will is, that he should be brought low, that he might exalt him. O! this self, it is a great enemy to mankind.

My intention is, to awaken people out of the sleep of sin, which is death; and to stir them up to righteousness, and love to the Lord, and their neighbour, even with their whole heart: this is what my heart breathes to, and supplicates the Lord of heaven for: then would the end of my labour, in his love, be answered; for great is the love of God, in sending his Son, and, also, in sending his servants, and stirring them up to rouse people out of the sleep of security, that they might see the danger they are in, and how near they lie to the brink of the pit of burning. O! that people would but seriously consider that which is shewed and told them in the love of the Lord. O! that it might be laid to heart. However, whether they will hear, or forbear, God will

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be clear, and his servants also will be clear. But if we not only hear, but also obey, that peace, which passeth the understanding of men (that our Lord giveth to his followers) will be our portion, and the lot of our inheritance forever: but this is on condition of our obedience, and keeping the commands of God: *If ye love me, keep my commandments* (John xiv. 15.) saith the Lord. So, if people live in saying, and not in doing, in professing, and confessing, yet still living in pride and high-mindedness, and in sin, it is apparent, they do not love Christ Jesus (according to his own words) neither doth he justify them; 'tis only the doers that he will justify. The apostle John says, *If a man says, he loves God, and yet hateth his brother, he is a liar*, 1 John iv. 20 and by plain scripture testimony, such are not of God: moreover, if he says, he loves Christ, yet doth not his sayings, he is also a liar, and the truth is not in him, or Christ is not in him; who said, *I am the truth*; and thus man becomes reprobated; for Paul, writing to the brethren, saith, *Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith, prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates*, 2 Cor. xiii. v. Which indwelling of Christ, is a great mystery to many; although Christ within (which the apostle preached) was the hope of the saints glory, Col. i. 27. And, oh! how earnest was Christ in prayer to his Father, That his followers may be one in him, and that they might be united together in one, John xvii. Such was the love of Christ to his church; now, what remains on the church's part, since Christ has done his part? Surely it is, that we love him again; for, saith John, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. They that dwell in enmity, are not the children of God; but the children of satan; who always hated the appearance of Christ, the light of the world; and yet stirreth up those that are led by his dark

spirit to war against him, and his seed, in his children; who said, *I am the light of the world.*

But indeed it is as Christ hath said, *Men love darkness rather than light*; and how strange is it, seeing the one is so glorious, and the other so miserable? But the reason is, as Christ hath shewed, *because their deeds are evil*, John iii. 19. That is indeed the very cause; for if their deeds were good, they would love the light which is Christ Jesus, the Lord of life and glory; and bring their deeds to him, that he might judge them; who will give righteous judgment to every man according to his works, John v. 29. The righteous will have their portion in the resurrection of life, joy and peace, in the Holy Ghost; but the wicked in the resurrection of damnation. Oh! that I might be instrumental in the hand of the Lord to open the eyes of some that are spiritually blind, that they might see the splendor, the beauty, and the great glory, of the dear Son of God, that most excellent Light which God hath prepared, according to good old *Simeon's* testimony of him, *Thou hast* (says he) *prepared him a Light to enlighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel*, Luke iii. 32. A glorious light indeed! truly, methinks every body should be in love with him: for my part he is my chiefest joy: I would not part with him for all the pomp, and vain-glory of the world; neither would I have the shining beams, and glorious rays (which comfort me for well-doing, and reprove me for, and discover the contrary) clouded from my sight and understanding, for the finest gold, or choicest rubies; such is my love to Christ, the bridegroom of souls: but, by the way, it hath cost me many a tear, and many groanings in my spirit, before I came thus to enjoy Christ; who is the beloved of all the redeemed. Oh! may I never give him cause to withdraw himself from dwelling in me. Oh! the universal love of Christ; 'tis everlasting to them that are open-hearted

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unto him, and all that will hear his voice, so as to obey it; for, says he, *I stand at the door and knock* (that is, the door of the heart of man) *if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and be with me*, Rev. iii. 20. And John says, *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us: God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 John iv. 16. A heavenly habitation, and glorious dwelling place! who would but endeavour to dwell in love, and forsake enmity, that they might attain unto such eternal happiness, as to have their abode with the Lord.

This fulfils the words of Christ. *For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*, John xiv. 17. How was he to be in him? A comforter for well doing, that they might have the hope of glory, and a reprover for sin, self righteousness and wrong judgment. Indeed it was the great love of God in thus sending his beloved son a Light into this dark world, to shew people their evil deeds, and to condemn sin in the flesh; for he is the sinful world's condemnation, as well as a Saviour and Justifier of the righteous and holy believer. The Jews of old hated him, and many of them did intend to darken his bright and shining light, but some of the Jews believed on him, and after they came truly to believe on his name, spread his gospel of truth and glad tidings among the children of men, and also suffered for his name's sake. It is also said, *He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believed on his name*, John i. 11, 12. But what say such to him as account themselves spiritual Jews (seeing the apostle tells us, *He is not a Jew that is one outwardly*, Rom. ii. 28.) I mean those that call themselves by his name? Why, many of them trample upon his light

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and appearance, and despise the spirit of his grace, which is a swift witness against evil, and lets men see what is good, and what is bad, comforts for the one, and brings judgment and condemnation for the other. I can truly say, I would with my whole heart, that God did dwell a comforter in all (or Christ, or the Holy Ghost, or holy Spirit, which are all one) but this can never be, while sin remains and has an evil root in mankind. *An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit.* By this we may know christians from anti-christians, and lovers of Christ, from them that love him not; if we love him we become subjects to him, subject to do his will. O! it is a brave station to be the subjects of the King of heaven, and if we love him unfeignedly with all our might and mind, and our neighbours (or them that are already his subjects) as ourselves, and with the sword of the spirit valiantly to encounter with the devil and satan; O then shall we be his subjects, and he will receive us into his warfare, and thro' him we shall be victorious, for the lamb and his followers will have the victory. I would press people in love into this warfare, having commission from my master and Lord (I mean spiritual) by shewing them what anxiety of soul, and distress of mind, they will procure to themselves, by living in enmity to the Lord, and his saints. O my soul, I charge thee, with all those that have any regard to the holy Jesus, obey the commands of the Lord, and love his followers, or thy neighbour as thyself: Let his universal spirit of love to all dwell in thee, O my soul!

I would have all to cast down that which they glory in (that is not right in his sight) at his footstool, and do like the poor penitent woman, that lay and wept at his feet, *Luke vii. 38.* She tho't all little enough to get into his favour. Christ himself also was meek and lowly, *Learn of me*, said he, *Mat. xi. 29.* All power in heaven and earth was given unto him;

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Take me (said he) for an example, when he washed his servants feet. O he was meek and lowly indeed, and seeing his love was so great to them, and is also to us, let us love him again, not with feigned love, but with love that may manifest us to be his followers; and in this love let us love one another; for this intent our Lord issued forth his royal command, which is this, *A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another,* John xiii. 34, 35. Christ's love was unfeigned to his disciples, nay to all the world in general; for what greater love can there be, than for a man to lay down his life for his friends: and he not only laid down his life for his friends, but for his enemies also, *Rom. v. 10.* So that his love was great and unfeigned: we ought with the same love to love him again, since that he loved us first; and this cannot be without obedience to his commands. Thus undoubtedly we should with true love love him, and one another: this love is exceeding precious, it thinks no evil, and we may be sure, will not do any willingly or knowingly. If a man seeth his neighbour or brother in that which is not right, he prayeth to the Lord to help him, and tenderly admonisheth him; yea, if having this love he woundeth, his wounds are faithful, for *Faithful are the wounds of a Friend,* Prov. xxv. 6. He that is thus endued with love, is not hindered from reproving his brother, but if there be a cause, it rather stirs him up to be faithful therein, without respect of persons. O the love that is raised in them that love the Lord above all, it is great to the sons and daughters of men; it doth wonderful things; it is valiant for God; it overcomes its enemies: it is not overcome with evil, but it often overcomes evil with good: it smiteth sin in the gate (that is, in its first appearance) before it be entered

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entred into man, so as to subject him thereto; it gets victory over the devil, for he cannot stand before God's love. I would to God that people did but know the virtue of love to Christ, and one another in him, it would cause them, for the enjoyment thereof, to forsake all manner of enmity one against another, and all things else, how near or dear soever; yea, though they were as a right hand or a right eye, they would be forsaken for its sake, and for the sake of him that first loved us: and then we should strive, through the ability of his grace (even the grace or spirit which he told *Paul* was sufficient for him) to love him again, and our neighbour as ourself; but this cursed self is loved too much, and our neighbour too little.

Paul, the apostle of Christ, did not after his conversion hate his neighbour, nor was he in enmity with them; indeed when he was *Saul*, he did oppress and injure his nearest neighbours and chiefest friends; for that blind zeal was part of that body of sin and death that was upon him, and from which, by the help of Christ's grace, he was delivered, and came to love his enemies; and for their good hazarded his life: and for his love to Christ laid it down, as many holy men have done since his time. Surely they had not much regard for self then! tho' it is a common expression now a days, *Every one for himself, and God for us all*; but if every one were for his neighbour or his brother as much as for himself, God would be the more for us all. But this self-love is in the sight of the Lord an abomination, and the great, eternal God, abhors it: therefore were the first and second commandments given forth.

If all people would obey these two commandments, the whole law and the prophets, yea, and the gospel too, would be all obeyed.

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But this self is a great enemy unto mankind, and doth very much hinder his eternal happiness; it shutteth the ear from hearing the cause of the widow and fatherless, or of the needy, and drowns the cry of the oppressed to which we ought not only to lend an ear, but also to administer relief, according to their necessity, and our ability. But mankind is too apt to despise the base and low things of the world, and to join with that which is pleasant to the eye, and agreeable to the lust of the heart; (like *Dives* the rich glutton of old, who loved self better than poor *Lazarus*) but do not consider that which is lasting, and would do them good for ever. How shall I express the excellent glory and eternal sweetness of this love to the Lord, and our neighbour? Oh! how is my soul grieved, and how doth my spirit mourn before the Lord, when I see any walk contrary to the commands of Christ, or that are in enmity to the truth, and in hatred one to another, even from my tender years, ever since God Almighty opened my understanding, and made known to me him that is true: and my cry hath been many times to him, to keep and preserve me in his true love and fear to the end of my days; in love both to him and the brethren: but more especially to those that do his will (altho' there is universal love in my heart to all) Christ said, *For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*, Mat. xii. 50. Therefore my love is more singly unto those. The apostle also thus writes concerning love to the brethren; *We* (says he) *know that we have passed from death unto life*. (How did they know it?) *because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death*, 1 John iii. 14. Are they then in death that are in enmity with the brethren? Assuredly they are, for this enmity is sin; *And the wages of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23. and those that are therein, are dead while

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while they live. I wish, and heartily pray to the God and Father of spirits, that from the snares of death his people may for ever be preserved.

Now I would shew people some of the many snares of death and Satan.

First, Some people are too apt to judge one another, and to speak evil of things they know not, except by report and supposition, which too often lets in enmity, and is not according to the mind of Christ, but is a snare of the enemy of man's salvation. Surely if people were sensible thereof, they would not so hardly censure one another: for indeed we ought to be well satisfied before we give judgment, and then it ought to be in love, and not in enmity. It is better to suffer, than to censure, or to be judged, than to judge. --- *Judge not, that ye be not judged*, Mat. vii. 1. --- said the judge of heaven and earth. But people are too much possessed with uncharitableness and revenge one towards another, and are not so ready to forgive one another their trespasses, as the Almighty is to forgive them: tho' to forgive one another their trespasses, be every christian's duty, and without which, we cannot justly expect God to forgive us our trespasses, as Christ taught, *Mat. vi. 14, 15.*

Secondly, Persecution for righteousness sake, also is another great branch of that corrupt tree, which never did, and never will bring forth good fruit, but must be cut down by the ax of God's power, which is laid to the root of every corrupt tree, in order to cut it down; and the Lord will burn it with unquenchable fire. It is the true church's lot to be persecuted, but she never persecutes any; for he that is her high priest for ever, commanded quite the contrary, *viz.* Love to enemies, and to do good to them that hated them, and to pray for them that despitefully used and persecuted them, *Matt. v. 44.* They were also to rejoice, and to be exceeding glad when

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when all manner of evil was spoken falsely against them for Christ's sake; because great should be their reward in heaven; and Christ observes, that so they persecuted the prophets, *Mat. v. 11. 12.*

Thirdly, Many are rebelling against God and doing despite to the spirit of grace in their own hearts; and trespassing one against another; not living in love, but in enmity against God and one another. The judgment of man is terrible to the rebellious, how much more if men rebel against God, our Saviour, will his judgment be just and dreadful, as he hath not only power to kill the body, but can afterwards cast the soul into hell? O! that the sons and daughters of men, would but fear to offend him, the king of eternal glory: *Israel* of old, his own peculiar people, did fear and tremble before him; even all their host, his presence was so dreadful, *Exod. xix. 18.* And a noble king made a decree, that men should fear and tremble before the living God, *Daniel vi. 26.*

Oh! that all would work out their salvation with fear and trembling, according to scripture testimony, *Phil. ii. 12.* I desire all people might thus love the Lord, then should we fear exceedingly to offend him: also if one man did truly love another very well, were the case thy own, thou wouldst very unwillingly offend him whom thou lovest dearly. So if we love Christ in deed, and in truth; then we should fear to offend him, and must of necessity love one another also: so shall we fulfil the great commands, that the whole law and the prophets hang on.

Fourthly, I have also many times been grieved, when I have heard cursing and swearing, and the Lord's name taken in vain, which many too much abound in (by sea and land) and too little consider that God will not hold them guiltless, *Exod. xx. 7.* I am sure this is far from obeying him. Oh! the

14 GOD's Great Love to MANKIND,

deep sense of this great sin, it hath been, and is of great moment, and is a great concern on my mind: vengeance from heaven is, and will be the portion of all such, that thus violate the mind and will of God. Judgment, judgment is the lot and inheritance of all the wicked, who remain and live in wickedness. Altho' the Lord is slow to anger, and of great loving-kindness, and his mercy endureth for ever, to them that truly repent of evil, and do that which is good: yet he has also prepared weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for them that continually live in sin. There is a possibility of sinning, until there is no mercy nor grace for man: witness the words of God; *My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh*, Gen. vi. 3. But those that are willing to put the day of God afar off, are ready to say, Christ is our advocate with the father; he maketh intercession for our sins; (very well) but it is conditionally: it is if thou wilt repent, and sin no more. (Mark that well!) Repentance without sinning no more, will not do. *John viii. 11.* confession is very good, but forsaking is abundance better: confession without forsaking will stand in but little stead in the day of account.

Fifthly. Also being drunk with wine, or with strong drink; drunkenness is a great sin: first, against God, and secondly, the abuse of God's mercies, and good creatures. And by this frame of drunkenness, men are often fitted for any business that their master the devil may call them to: so that this great sin ought to be strictly watched against. Surely if men had any good desires in their hearts, or any love to God, they would refrain from such great wickedness. I admire how people can expect mercy from God, or the intercession of Christ, when they are piercing his sides, and putting of him to open shame: for those that are sinning against him, are piercing of him. How can such expect he will interced

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interceed for them, when they have dealt so shamefully with him, and grieved him, and from time to time disobey'd his voice? Now suppose a man stood condemn'd before a judge, and that at the judge's right hand there sat one who had power in his hand, and this poor condemn'd person, hopes he will interceed for him; and yet this poor wretch has done to him as before mentioned. What grounds can he have to hope for intercession, clemency or lenity, while he believes he can do no otherwise than sin against him all his days? For my part, I think his faith, hope and belief, is but vain; without any reason or ground. But he that loveth Christ Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, so as to keep his commandments, the Lord will love him, and interceed for him, and make himself known unto him; according to his words, which he spake, *He that hath my commandments; and keeps them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and manifest myself unto him,* John xiv. 21.

Sixthly, Covetousness, which is idolatry, is also another great snare of the enemy, and many are caught therein. It is in vain for the covetous to say he hath a share in the love of God; for he hath neither love to the Lord, nor to his neighbour. A poor naked man might ask him long enough for relief, or for his coat, before he would give him his hand to help, or coat either; or any manner of relief: altho' Christ expressly commanded it, *Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow, turn not thou away,* Mat. v. 42. How can any be so hard-hearted, to see his brother's or his neighbour's poverty, and not administer of his ability to the needful necessity? But says the covetous or miserly man, I have children, or a family to take care of: but too often covetousness brings a curse, and not a blessing, upon family and children also.

16 GOD's Great Love to MANKIND,

Perhaps one that is covetous may say, that charity begins at home. But let him remember, that if it doth begin there, the consequence most commonly is very bad when it ends there. Every christian hath need to have charity (in his breast) in a two-fold sense, or else there is no proper pretence to christianity: in short, covetousness is out of the love either to God or man: all those (with abundance more, that I shall forbear to mention) are eminent snares of the devil; and satan layeth them according to the propensity of man and woman, and suits them with their nature. Oh! I'll warrant thee he will colour them finely, and put a pleasant gloss upon them, to betray thy soul, and keep it in bondage for ever.

Seventhly, It is he that tells the murderer, that it is better to live a merry life and short, than to take pains and care all his life-time; and the thief likewise with the robber.

Eighthly, It is he also that tells the whoremongers and drunkards, that so many people are in these practices, because it is natural for people to be so overcome; but he don't tell them that by nature all are children of wrath, and that without this lustful nature be overcome, there's no salvation, *Eph. ii. 3.*

Ninthly, It is he that tells the swearers, they are so used to it, that it is impossible for them to leave it off. He never bids them repent and forsake, that they might find mercy with God and Christ that died for them; but died not that they should live in sin.

Tenthly, It is he that tells the covetous, 'tis good to be saving, and not to spend all his substance in gluttony, and pride; no, he'll bid him hate pride, and that he should not give much alms, though rich in this world; for the devil will tell him, that it is proud people does it, only in ambition, and to be seen of men; but he will not tell him, it is a sin to be

be covetous: he also tells the proud, that they are counted happy, and that pride is counted good for the promoting the commonwealth, and that it is as good to be out of the world, as out of the fashion; he tells them, that pride is neatness, and how many pretty excuses he has, to keep people in pride, is admirable; he don't tell 'em, that Christ the Lord was meek and lowly, and that they should take him for an example. He, the Lord, did not come in splendour and glory, outwardly; but plain in speech, and also in apparel, wearing a coat without a seam, being cloathed and adorned with the robes of righteousness and love. — This is my beloved! may he be thine also, gentle reader. Oh! how lovely is he? He is the chiefest of ten thousands. I intreat you, oh ye children of men, both sons and daughters! don't you offend Christ, by disobeying of him, the bridegroom of the righteous; but I beseech you, in his sweet and tender love, if you have offended him, by sinning against him, oh! for the Lord's sake, and your own souls sake, do so no more; but unfeignedly repent; and then in due time (when he hath tried you, and found you faithful) he will embrace you with the sweet embraces of his love, which is better than wine, and far excels the love of women.

Now if the poor creature did but love the Lord its maker above all, and its fellow creature as itself, the enemy of mankind would be overcome, and we made more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us, even Christ Jesus, our Lord; and man and woman would see all these (abovesaid) evil things to be abominable, and perhaps many more which I have not mentioned, insomuch that self would be abhorred as in dust and ashes, and the Lord would be loved, and glorified above all, for which end he created mankind: but certain it is, that this end can't be answered, nor the Lord beloved, without sin be forsaken,

18 *Fruits of divine Meditation at Sea.*

faken, and hated; for the devil is the author of sin, and Christ of righteousness.

I, says Christ, *am the way, the truth, and the life*, John xiv. 6. And, again, *John viii. 12. I am the light of the world.* Oh! saith my soul, in abundance of love and good will unto the sons and daughters of men, that they would but walk in the way of truth, and the light of the world; then they would see clearly the snares of satan; which that every one, even male and female (especially those that profess christianity) might do, and escape the same, is the very desire of my soul: even so prayeth him, that through the spirit of Jesus Christ, and ability of his grace, labours for the salvation of mankind.

A. D. 1697.

T. C.

FRUITS of divine meditation at sea, in the year 1699.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night, Psal. i.

Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, Mat. vi. 20.

1. **I**T is good for man, whose breath is in his nostrils, to think upon his Maker, as much as in him lieth, both night and day;

2. Who is the fountain of all mens happiness, and the ocean of their bliss; not only in this world, but in that which is to come; even to all eternity.

3. How sweet is that meditation, that is on the sovereign Lord of heaven, and on the Prince of everlasting glory?

4. No

4. No earthly thing is to be compared with it, all the glory, all the pomp, and vanity, of this fading, transitory world, is not comparable with it: divine and inward contemplation upon God, is no less than heaven upon earth to the soul.

5. This mine eye hath seen; for which I humbly bow before the great Lord of all; whose goodness to man cannot fully be set forth, neither by the most excellent orator, nor with a ready writer's pen.

6. God delighteth in those that are intent in looking unto him; and it is man's duty to look to him, over all visible things.

7. How profitable, and greatly advantageous, it is to the soul, to be inward with God. Oh! it is altogether admirable.

8. The unspeakable treasures of life, and of wisdom, are to be found in inward meditation, and holy contemplation on God.

9. When a man, in this sort, is delighting himself with his maker, and advising with him, he can want no good thing. In days of old God was, now is, and ever will be found by man, in this inward concern of the soul.

10. A man in this state, will always curb high thoughts of self, as being in the presence of the Almighty; for then he is truly sensible of his presence: who is it that will vaunt, or carry himself loftily, when God is present, and he considers it.

11. Indeed the presence of the Almighty is every where, but many have lost the sense thereof, for want of inward thoughts on God, and studious contemplation on the King of heaven, whose sovereignty is sweet over the works of his hands;

12. He is full of grace, and full of truth, full of mercy and full of justice: his law is light, and his commands are as burning lamps; in a word, he is full of heavenly majesty and divine power, so that no characters can set forth the fulness of God.

13. Ob!

13. Oh! that man was rightly sensible of these things, it would cause him with an humble heart, to implore the majesty of heaven for his favour, and petition him for the aid and assistance of his grace, to do his holy and heavenly will.

14. Man would then see his own weakness and poverty, and how unable he is to do, or work, any good thing of himself, without the help of the holy spirit.

15. Which gift, God through Christ, giveth to that soul which is inward in its thoughts upon God; whose wisdom and power is past finding out, unless in this frame of mind the Lord reveals it.

16. But worldly thoughts, and vain cogitations, hinder the mind from being with God, the fountain of all good.

17. Evil works, or words, also stupify the mind, and deaden the most noble part of man, so that slavish fear, instead of that fear which is mixed with true love and honour, is begotten in the heart.

18. All things of any evil tendency entertained in the soul, are an obstruction to its duty to God.

19. Who would but lay up treasure in heaven, that the heart might also be there? And what treasure like that in heaven, or what place so fit to lay it in as that is?

20. If a man did but, with considerate thoughts, weigh in his mind the shortness and uncertainty of time in this life, and the boundless ocean of eternity; with a life of bliss and glory, or else of woe and misery, that will never end;

21. Without his heart be harder than a flinty rock, it would lead him into tenderness, serious thoughts on the name of God, and into humiliation.

22. Christ Jesus, the anointed of God, was found greatly in humiliation; even he who said, *Learn of me, and follow me, who am meek, and low in heart.*

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God calls for humility of all men. He beholds the proud and scornful afar off.

23. Every proud and exalted thought God will bring to judgment, and likewise such words and actions.

24. And, indeed, the thing acted, or done, must first be conceived, or thought, before it be brought forth; for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*, and the man acteth.

25. Therefore to have the thoughts of the heart on God, and to contemplate on heaven, and heavenly things, is truly excellent.

26. And altho' this incumbent duty of man is so averie to him, in his natural state; yet it is most easy, sweet and pleasant, to the soul, when the mind is bent after and set on heavenly things.

27. And that which is still more admirable is, that God is the alone comfort, joy, helper, leader, and conductor of such a soul.

28. But, oh! the thoughts of man are too much taken up with earthly and perishing things, being content with the shadow, or shell, of divine contemplation; righteousness, and true religion; so that too few are earnestly seeking the substance thereof.

29. That the noble creature man, which God hath made but a little lower than the angels, and given him power over those creatures that are more ignoble than himself, should so degenerate from his Maker, as to fix his thoughts on terrestrial things, is admirable to heaven-born souls, whose God is the Lord.

30. Which way can the soul look, or turn itself, but that it must needs see the glory of the God of heaven, unless the god of this world hath blinded the eye of the mind.

31. Look upwards, and we may behold the brightness of his glory in the firmament, and the
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22 *Fruits of divine meditation at sea.*

workmanship of his hands in the sun, moon and stars.

32. Or if we look on the earth, or in the sea, we may see his great wonders; and if, in sincerity, we behold the heavenly work of his hands, with an eye of faith, oh! how can it do any less but draw deep considerations of the omnipotence of God.

33. Thus, beholding the works of God, and looking on his works of old, and the noble acts which he hath done in former times, will raise holy desires to be with him, and to be in his presence, when time to us, in this world, shall be no more.

34. It will also beget a loving fear of the Lord in the soul, lest that it should offend him.

35. Such a soul will be inwardly concern'd before the Lord, and will seek him with unwearied travel of spirit.

36. After this manner will that soul cry to God, in the spirit of prayer and supplication, that is travelling towards the city whose builder and maker is God;

37. Lord, I am poor, do thou make me rich; I am needy, O! strengthen me, even me, O, my heavenly Father! for I am the least of many: O, my Saviour, have mercy upon me!

38. Thou seest my weakness, and knowest my want, and how unable I am, of myself, to do thy will; give me grace, or else I die; save me by the power and by the spirit of thy son, or else I perish for ever.

39. Lord, I believe; my faith is in thee, and in the power of thine anointed, help mine unbelief, for Jesus' sake, I humbly pray thee, O thou great Creator of the children of men!

40. O! great, eternal God, thou knowest my secret desires, and the private devotion of my heart.

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41. My sighing and tears are after thee; O thou beloved of my soul !

42. All the profit and pleasure that is in this world is nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison of thee, and the enjoyment of thy presence, O thou Lord of life and glory.

43. Thou great Creator of all things, from whom all things have their being, send forth the spirit of thy son into my heart, whereby with acceptance, I may cry, *Abba Father.*

44. O! holy Father let me feel thy power, that I may be able to make war in thy righteousness, against the enemy of my poor soul.

45. Great, eternal God, give me wisdom to walk uprightly before thee, and before the children of men : O that my soul may seek after it for ever !

46. With which, O Lord, fill my earthen vessel, for Jesus' sake, that I may be gentle, and easy to be entreated to do thy will, so that I may never rebel against thee.

47. Lord, do not tarry long for me ; for if thou hidest thy face, I am troubled ; or when the curtain is drawn between me and my Maker, then my spirit within me languisheth.

48. Therefore, O Lord, arise, and the thoughts that are at enmity with thee, shall be scattered from my soul.

49. Then shall my soul be a fit receptacle for thee, and a temple thou dost delight to dwell in, O living God !

50. And, holy father, as thou hast begotten those thoughts and desires in my soul, so do for many more of the sons and daughters of men.

51. Such a soul, whose thoughts and meditations are on this wise, almighty God never did, nor never will, reject, or cast off.

52. Heaven and earth may pass away, but the mercy and goodness of the Lord God of heaven and earth.

earth will not pass away from those that are thus inwardly exercised before him.

53. The holy men of God, and the faithful in ages past, bore testimony to these truths.

54. And there is that of God in the souls of the faithful, that can say amen to the same.

55. *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, saith the Almighty, to, and concerning, those who love him truly.

56. *Fear not, worm Jacob, for I will be with thee*, saith the Lord; *if thou goest through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee; and if thou goest through the water, it shall not overwhelm thee.*

An exhortation to youth, and others, to follow: being part of a letter from T. C. to a friend in Dublin.

LET the young man and maiden, diligently read the holy scriptures; and whenever they come to a passage that affects them, let them, not only turn down that leaf, but let them be sure that it hath place in their hearts: and when they read of a good man, or woman, then let them earnestly pray, and fervently cry to the Lord, the great God, and holy Father of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and God of all the righteous in all ages, that he would please to make them like to those his dear children and servants. Oh! that all young people might not forget this great command of God, *Honour thy parents, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*, *Exod. xx. 12.* How many stubborn youths hath the Lord cut off in their prime, and in the flower of their days: and, on the other hand, how hath the great Almighty blessed, prospered, preserved and honoured, those that have been obedient to their parents, and honoured their parents and elders? And let the young

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young men and maidens note this, That none truly honour their parents and elders, but those who are pious and virtuous; such were *Joseph*, *Samuel*, *David* and *Solomon*; as also king *Josiah*, who began to reign at eight years old. God Almighty gives many a good sense of his grace at that age, and thereabouts; he ordaineth praise many times out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Let the youth endeavour to follow those good and great men; and for their instruction, I shall give a touch of the above five worthies.

First, In particular, beginning with *Joseph*. His father sent him to his brethren, *Gen.* xxxvii. he went willingly (tho' his brethren hated him) *Gen.* xlv. 7. and when it was in his power to hurt them, he rendered them good for their evil, xlv. 15. a good example for both young and old. And when tempted to sin by his mistress in *Egypt*, he said, *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* *Ch.* xxxix. 9. Who highly favoured him for his piety, virtue and chastity.

Secondly, *Samuel*, for whom his mother prayed earnestly to the Lord, *1 Sam.* i. 10. and when he had given him to her, she gave him to God again: a good pattern for all mothers. When he was but a little lad, the Almighty called him, *chap.* iii. 4, 5, &c. and he thought it had been *Eli*, up he gets, and said, *Thou callest me?* No, said the old man, *I did not call thee, lie down again.* He did not grumble, as many of our youths do: the Lord called again; he willingly runs to *Eli*; he did not love his bed so much as obedience, and said, *Thou didst call me.* *Eli* observing that God had spoke to the child, said to him, when he calleth again, say, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.* Let old ones mind this, and encourage their youth to answer the call of God betimes: so God called again, and he answer'd: *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.* The Lord by his grace

grace calls to little ones, many times in the midst of their play, and sometimes in their beds: oh! that our youth may do and say as little *Samuel*; that they may grow as he did, and be in favour both with God and man.

Thirdly, David, his father's youngest son, kept his sheep, and in that innocent employ the Lord was with him to admiration; his father sent him to his brethren: but *Eliab*, his eldest brother, frowned upon him and reviled him; he only made this soft reply, *Is there not a cause?* He overcame the great Philistine, in the name of the God of *Israel*; and God highly exalted him for his uprightness, sincerity and piety, *Sam. xvi. 11, 13, 27, 28, 29.* which was very great: for notwithstanding *Saul* would have kill'd him; yet when *David* had him in his power, he spared him, insomuch that *Saul* wept, and said, *If a man find his enemy will he let him go? 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, 10, &c. ver. 19.* And there was loving greeting between them: so he overcame the evil of *Saul's* heart, by the good that was in his; according to those holy expressions of the apostle *Paul*, *Rom. xii. 21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Words worthy to be writ in letters of gold, and more worthy to be observed and practised.

Fourthly, Solomon, who asked of God wisdom, being in his own eyes but as a little child, said unto the Lord, *Give unto thy servant an understanding heart, 1 Kings iii. 7, 9.* Which request God granted him, and gave him also riches and honour. Oh! see the benefit of pleasing God, young men and young women.

Fifthly, Josiah, a young prince, and king: how zealous was he for God's service and worship! what a wonderful reformation he made in the land, and how he was lamented at his death! *2 Kings xxii. 1, 2, 3, &c.* as generally all good zealous men and women are, either old or young.

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Having touched a little of the young men, let me just a little remember the young women also: as for example, *Ruth* and *Abigail*, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25. two discreet young women; the first very loving, kind and true to *Naomi*, her mother-in-law; a good pattern for all daughters-in-law; *Entreat me not*, said she, *to leave thee*; *for where thou goest, I will go*; and *where thou lodgest, I will lodge*; and *where thou diest, there will I be buried*; *thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God*, *Ruth* i. 16, 17. The Lord abundantly rewarded her for this godly resolution. *Boaz* had a sense of her virtue and piety, and said, *All the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman*, Chap. iii. 11. Which doubtless was a strong motive for him to love her; and that love commonly lasteth till death: whereas when money is a motive, it often happens that many evils attend.

Also wise *Abigail*, her ingenious speech to *David*, and contrivance to hinder him from shedding blood; which he was coming to do (thinking he had cause) but prevented by her wisdom: which, to be sure, was a great motive to him to love her, after *Nabal's* death, and to take her to wife. She was no proud woman: *For*, said she, *let thy handmaid serve to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 23, 24, 25, &c. Much might be said, but I design brevity.

As there are many good examples in holy scripture, whereby young people might be stirred up to virtue; so also there are examples of the judgments of God on disobedient, impious, vain and ungodly men and women, even young and old. Oh! let our youth consider (I beseech them) wicked, disobedient *Abshalom*, and poor *Dinab*; also the prince and the *Moabitish* damsel, whom zealous *Phineas* slew; 2 *Sam.* xv. 10, 11, &c. *Gen.* xxxiv. *Numb.* xxv. 8. for God was angry, and is angry with the wicked every day.

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The before mentioned good men and women were in the time of the law; and let me add to them, the holy pattern and good example of our great Lord and blessed Master, who *loved righteousness and hated wickedness, therefore he was highly exalted, and anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows: he had the heathen given him for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession: Psal. xlv. 7. Psal. ii. And, what is more, all power in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 28.*

Oh, dear young men and maidens! He is our great pattern, whom we are (and ought) to take for our example; walking in all humility and reverence. *He, saith Christ, that will be my disciple (that is, his scholar) must take up his cross, deny himself, and follow me, Luke ix. 23. xiv. 27.* Oh blessed pattern! oh! glorious example! let us follow him whilst we have breath in this world; it was always well for them that followed him. What think ye, oh young men and maidens! had it not been well for that rich young man, that he had left all, and followed dear Jesus, *Mark x. 21, 22.* Be ye your own judges; look on your pattern (*i. e.* Christ Jesus) when he was but twelve years old; see what he was doing; forget not that saying which his mother laid up in her heart, *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* Luke ii. 49, 51. Oh, dear youths! it is good business, I can say through some good experience; let me tell you for your edification, I have served my master, holy Jesus, and followed him several years according to the best of my understanding, and I have always found him a good master; his service is sweet, and his work is delightful. I have a great deal more to say for my Lord and Master, but my design is brevity: *His yoke is easy, and burthen is light, Matt. xi. 29, 30.* He hath said it, and I have experienced it. Wherefore I am the more free to invite you to follow him, and be
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his scholars. An eminent servant and scholar of his said, *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ,* 1 Cor. i. 1. The apostle Paul exhorts Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 12. a young scholar, and his son in the faith, to be a good example to others; as also his son Titus, Titus xxvii. Acts xxi. 9. We are also told of four young women, who were prophetesses, and divers others; a more particular account of whose exemplary lives and actions are recorded in holy scripture for our learning; unto which, with the grace of God in the heart, I recommend all young men and women, and conclude these small tokens of my very dear love in Christ, our holy Lord and Master, desiring the above may be as so many patterns for them to follow.

T. C.

A loving invitation to young and old, in Holland; and elsewhere, to seek and love Almighty God, and to prepare in time for their eternal welfare.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, and call ye upon him while he is near, Isa. lv. 6.

To the READER.

Having from my childhood been a lover of the Dutch, and that love being increased by travelling in Holland and Germany, it came weightily on my mind to invite and persuade this people (with others; into whose hands this may come, and especially the youth) To love, serve and fear the LORD, the ALMIGHTY, the great JEHOVAH, and that they first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, as Christ exhorts or commands, Mat. vi. 33. Those ponderous and extraordinary expressions, with the large promise thereto annexed, are well worth the due notice, and weighty consideration of all, both youth and aged; but

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seem to be very apt to the state and condition of those that are just entering into the business and affairs of the world. Oh! that the youth had but faith in the blessed Lord JESUS, and owned his pure doctrine, now in their tender years; and in the prime of their days, that they would remember their Creator in the days of their youth, before the evil days come, *Eccl. xii. 1.* Oh! that in their blossoming and blooming spring-time, they might be like to lovely branches, and growing trees, of righteousness, bearing much fruit, much good fruit of piety and virtue: in which, saith our holy Lord Jesus Christ, is your heavenly Father glorified. This is the real and hearty desire of my soul, for the youth of this and all generations, male and female, yea, both young and old, in all nations throughout the world: the universal love of God flows and overflows in my soul, like a living stream, at this time, as also at many others, to all my fellow mortals. Oh the great love of God in Christ Jesus, our great, holy, and good Father, Lord, and Master, is wonderful to mortals! whose divine love is abundantly, and also universally shed abroad to all nations, through his eternal spirit and grace in the hearts of the sons and daughters of men, in order to draw, lead and guide, men and women from earth to heaven.

Thus being desirous (according to my measure) to promote truth and righteousness in the earth; also being sensible of the love, mercy, and goodness of God, in my very young and tender years; I am willing, for the sake of well-inclined young men and women, to send forth into the world this loving invitation: and am desirous, for the love I bear to the people of the Dutch nation, that this might be translated into the Dutch language; hoping it may be beneficial to some well-inclined souls, in order to stir them up to seek, serve, and love Almighty God. *Amen.*

So wisheth, and heartily prayeth, a friend to, and lover of all mankind.

T. C.

A

*A loving invitation to young and old, in Holland, and
elsewhere, &c.*

IT is a thing truly excellent for mortals to love,
serve and fear him that made them, and gave
unto all life and being: and to begin this work
betimes, is very advantageous to the never dying
soul. It is also an indispensable duty, which is in-
cumbent upon every one, male and female; and
whoever is found in the neglect thereof, will certainly
have cause dearly to repent it, and unless they do
repent before they go hence, and see man no more,
will be miserable to all eternity. Which solid con-
sideration, hath often been weighty on my mind,
and I could not be clear (as I thought) in the sight
of God, without laying of it before men and women.

Now, that we may so do, consider, truth com-
mands us, reason persuades us, and example is very
powerful and inviting. Oh! that the children of
men would be wise to salvation, and embrace the
love of God in his dear and well-beloved Son, our
Lord Jesus Christ, who himself said, *I am the way,
the truth, and the life*, John xiv. 6. Oh! surely
here is a three-fold cord (*i. e.* truth, reason and
example) which is not easily broken: God Almight-
y grant, for Christ's sake, that by it some poor
soul might be drawn to him, even now in their ten-
der years: *To day, to day*, if any will hear the voice
of the Lord, oh! let them not harden their hearts;
for that is provoking to him that made us. How
know we whether he who made the heavens, will
be pleased to give us another hour? How know we,
but that after this day we may never open our eyes,
till we open them in eternity? Oh eternity, eternity,
that boundless ocean! who can fathom those words,
for ever and ever? what will this world, and all its
glories and vanities signify, or avail to poor souls,
when rolling from side to side on a dying-bed.

It will therefore be well for both old and young to note this.

First, The old, because it is not likely they should have many days, according to the course of nature; and a common proverb, i. e. *The young (may live, and they) may die, but the old must die.*

Secondly, The young, because they know not but they may die to-morrow.

In the great and notable day of the most High, oh! then, then, heavenly things will be found serious and solid truths, and not toys and trifles; nor indifferent things; when *He shall come as in flames of fire, to render vengeance (which is only his) upon all the workers of iniquity, and shall come to judge the secrets of all mens hearts, by the great Man, and just Judge, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Wherefore, let me prevail with some poor souls, now in time, to lay the truth to heart, and to be found in the work of God in their day: that so for their pains here, they may receive their penny hereafter; and that enlivening, that quickening answer of well-doing, may be their portion, and the lot (the glorious lot) of their inheritance: *Come ye blessed, well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, Mat. xxv. 21, 23, 34.* Oh powerful voice, and heart ravishing sentence! enough to make one alive, tho' dead; and exceeding joyful, though sorrowful even unto death. Oh! this divine favour and grace, wherewith the most High will favour those that love him, and faithfully serve him, in this his great and notable day, will far exceed the favour of kings and princes: for those that get the latter, can only be happy (or so accounted) in this world, which is but momentary; and those who are living and sensible witnesses of the former, are certainly happy, even in this world (although men may not see it) and likewise everlastingly happy in that world which is to come. To be sensible of God's

grace

grace in the heart, and to follow the holy teachings of it, is preferable to all things here below, it will make one more wise and more comely, than all outward learning, beauty or parts whatever. God Almighty grant, I beseech him, that all our young men, our rich men, our wise men, may only glory in him, according to the language of the spirit in the holy scriptures, *Let not the young or strong man glory in his youth or strength, nor the rich man in his riches, nor the wise man in his wisdom: but he that glories, let him glory in the Lord; or in this, that he knows the Lord.* Let the wits of the age consider this well; let the boaster and disputer rightly note this, and he'll have cause to bow before heaven's Majesty: what becomes of the young man and young woman's strength, and lovely beauty, when their heads are laid in their cold grave? What will become of, or of what service will the riches of the rich man be to him, when he shall receive his summons to his long home? May he not then say, Oh! that I had been as industrious to get heaven, and peace with my Maker, as I have been to get this world. Let all worldly-minded men and women remember the wonderful exhortation of Christ Jesus with the rich young man, *Mat. xix. 16, 17, &c.* This is not to hinder any in their outward concerns: for the heart of man may be in heaven, tho' his hands may be in his employment.

And as to the wise man: pray what will become of his great wit, his acquired parts, his nice and far-fetch'd arguments and criticisms, when pale-fac'd death shall look him in the face, and strike him with his sharp arrows? Then he'll find, that it had been much better for him that he had *lived* well, altho' he had not talked so much, or so well: to *talk well*, is good; but to *live well* is much better. To *talk finely*, and *live badly*, is of little worth. Oh! that the great master-workman of all, may drive home this nail,

in

in the heart of him whose eye shall look thereon, by his mighty hammer, the hammer of his word, his heart-breaking, heart-melting, and heart-piercing word; according to the doctrine of the holy spirit in the holy scriptures, *Is not my word as a fire? Is not my word as a hammer? Is not my word as a sword?* Jer. xxiii. 29. (i. e.) to burn, to break, to cut down all manner of sin: not to destroy man, but sin in man. Hear farther the language of the holy spirit; *Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend up into heaven, to fetch it down from above? Or who shall go down into the deep, or beyond the seas, to fetch it from thence? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth, that thou mayst do it.* Deut. xxx. 14. Rom. x. 7, 8, 9. This was, and is, and ever will be the doctrine of the gospel: from which people may perceive, that Christ Jesus is near to them; near to save, near to deliver, near to redeem. The great Jehovah, the blessed Jesus, the holy divine Spirit, is not only a God afar off, but also a God near at hand, and a present and sure help in the needful time, *Psal. xli. 1.* Oh! blessed be his name, for ever and ever.

Now I appeal to the consciences of all men, whether they have not, or do not sensibly witness, something (of a contrary nature to sin and unrighteousness) to reprove them, and convince them of the evil of their ways, and doings, perhaps sometimes in the midst of their vanity, in the song, in the dance, or in the game; or sometimes after a debauch, or for their pride, either in mind or in apparel, for over-reaching, or covetousness: all which (with all manner of evils) are of the devil. And the King of heaven is lifting up his holy and righteous spirit as a standard against it, and against him, who is the author of it. Oh! let this his convincing grace take place in thy heart, oh mortal man! for know of a truth, it is the very grace of God to thy

soul;

hereon, a word, rt-pier- e holy a fire? sword to cut an, but e holy up into hall ge it from thee, in do it, as, and gospel: t Jesus, near d Jesus, far off, and fur h ble- , whe- , some- hteous- of the netimes in the e a de- in ap- which And d righ- ast him, vining an: for to thy soul;

soul; for infallible proof of which (besides the experience of the faithful) take these two texts of holy Scripture (the doctrine of which will stand for ever, notwithstanding all the opposition of men) i. e. *I will pray to the Father, says Christ, and he will give you another comforter, even the spirit of truth, that he may abide with you for ever; and when he is come, he shall convince the world of sin, John xiv. 16. and xvi. 8.* Again, *The grace of God which brings salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 11.* Why should the Almighty shew to men the evil of their ways? Why don't he let them run on in their vanities, without controul? (Oh ye children of men!) it is his meer grace, and his meer mercy to the precious, dear-bought, and never-dying souls of poor mortal mankind: for he would have none to perish; if any perish, their destruction is of themselves, but their help is of the Lord. Oh! that people would be entreated and persuaded, through loving invitation, to follow the Lord fully, and to do his work faithfully.

Now let me return a little to, and let my pen drop somewhat concerning that *three-fold cord* above mentioned. I again humbly beg of the Lord, the great God, and Father of spirits, and of our dear Lord Jesus, that this may be instrumental, in his hand, to draw some poor seeking, travelling soul, from earth, towards heaven; the which, if it doth, let the praises alone be given to God, through his well-beloved Son.

First then: As to *truth*; I would hope few in this generation, who profess christianity, need to say, *What is truth?* God Almighty, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, is that infinite divine truth, which will endure for ever: and he hath said, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind and strength.*

Strength. And indeed he is an object that is thereof richly worthy; and this is his law, which is to endure for ever; and he which doth and teacheth it, is to be called *great in the kingdom of God*, Mat. v. 10. and that it might not be forgotten, he wrote it in stony tables: which law, *Jacob's seed* broke and transgressed. Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, who spoke it by the prophet, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their Hearts*, Jer. xxxi. 33. Oh! there 'tis written in large characters, very plain and legible, and easy to be read of mankind. And whereas *Moses*, the man of God, was an instrument to promote the holy law outwardly, written on tables of stone, among the children of *Israel*; so *Christ Jesus*, in this gospel-day, is promoting and proclaiming the power of this law inwardly engraven in mens hearts by God's finger, throughout the whole world: this great law of love (in which all the law and the prophets is contained) *Christ* not only lived in it, and declared it to mortals; but he also died in it; and for it, and for us also, and sealed his holy, glorious testimony, and doctrine, with his most precious blood: this is he, of whom the voice from the most excellent Glory, said, *This is my beloved Son; in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him*, Mat. xvii. 5. This is he, of whom the former Law-giver said, *The Lord your God shall raise up a prophet from amongst your brethren, him shall you hear in all things*, Deut. xviii. 18. This is he who said, *I am the way, the truth; and the life*, John xiv. 17. This is he that said, *He dwelleth with you; and shall be in you*: and again, *I stand at the door and knock, if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him*, Rev. iii. 20. Oh! methinks his love is wonderful; he not only commands obedience; but invites to it. Oh! who can be so hard-hearted and so cruel to him, and themselves also, as to slight and refuse such heavenly divine offers of in-

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finite love, grace and mercy? *The spirit and the bride say, come; and all that are a-thirst, may come, and drink freely; and buy heavenly milk, and rich wine, without money, or any natural or outward price,* Rev. xxii. 17. Isa. lv. 1.

Secondly, Touching reason: it is very reasonable, that we should serve and love God Almighty, in this space of time that we have here in this world, and work the works of piety and virtue; for, and because, there is solid peace therein: here none can make afraid, but the soul is calm and quiet, as being anchor'd in a safe harbour. Here no law can take hold of us: If any should imagine, that there is no future rewards or punishments, which no mortal can do without blushing, or self-condemnation, as I conceive: yet a life of holiness is a much better life, even for the body, for its health, and most sweet repose and pleasure that is solid, and not flashy, and its outward tranquillity in every respect; I appeal to the reasoning wits of the age, whether the above be not a great and undeniable truth: Besides, all true men and women, in practising as above, have a living hope and faith, through and in Christ, of a glorious rest to eternity, which is very reasonable to believe, since undeniably Christ wrought such wonderful works and mighty miracles, which before were never wrought by man on earth: so that those must needs be self-condemned too, that believe not on him, his works and grace. There is no writ nor wit in the whole world, that did, can, or ever will be able to make void, or lay waste the great, mighty, and miraculous works of truth, which were done by the blessed Jesus. *Moses* was a mighty man of God, and highly favoured, and greatly beloved of him, and did many mighty works; yet *Christ* exceeded him; as also did his dispensation. *Moses* went through the sea: *Christ* went upon the sea. *Moses* prayed for bread from heaven, and it was given in abundance:

Christ with a few small fishes, and seven loaves, fed many thousands, *Mat.* xv. 36. (which were unreasonable to expect, but from a divine hand) *Moses* prayed for water for the people: *Christ* made wine, and admirable wine too, even of water, *John* ii. *Moses* preached the law and judgment to *Israel* only: But *Christ Jesus* preached grace, mercy, peace and truth, not only to *Israel*, but also to all the world, through divine faith in God, in and through repentance, and the work of the spirit. Oh! is not here reason and truth pleading with, and persuading poor creatures, to love, serve and follow, reverence and fear, their Creator.

Whether the above matter be pleasant news to our sprightly youths, I'll not determine; but I am positive, they'll find it truth one day.

'Tis likely some such doctrine as this might better please the sparks of the age, and the jolly young men and maidens up and down in the world, with. Rejoice, O young man and young women, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; follow the lusts of thy heart, and the sight of thine eyes: but let them remember, that for all these things God will bring them to judgment, *Eccl.* xi. 9. They must surely come to judgment: they'll have it inwardly and secretly in their hearts, here in this world (notwithstanding they may endeavour to hide it from men; but they cannot hide it from heaven, from the all-seeing heart-piercing eye of the Holy-one: *He who inhabits eternity, whose dwelling is in the light; and whose eye goes through the earth, beholding the evil and the good*) likewise they will have condemnation without end, in the world that is to come. Oh, let the youth and aged seriously consider of it!

And farther, let them call to mind, the great and heavy judgments that have fallen upon the wicked and ungodly men, many of which were foretold by the messengers of heaven, and came to pass according

to their sayings, viz. The flood of waters, which destroyed the old world (which the very *Indians* in *America* have a notable notion of, handed down to them by the tradition of their fathers to this day.) As also the destruction of the land, and inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*: and the thousands of thousands that have been destroyed in battles and fights; which will still be, and continue to the world's end, unless people come into the love of God, which will teach them to *love one another*; and into the faith and doctrine of the Prince of peace, which is, *To do unto all men, as we would have them do unto us, and to do good for evil*, Matt. vii. 12. which to be sure is not to destroy. Likewise the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and scattering of the *Jews*, the seed of faithful *Abraham*; and divers dismal and terrible earthquakes, which have happened in these latter ages of the world; some of the dreadful ruins of which, mine eyes have seen in my travels. Surely there is much reason to walk in reverence, and holy fear, before the great Lord of all: he who made the heavens and the earth, the seas, and the fountains of water, and hath given life and breath to all that move therein, can take it from them at his pleasure, in the twinkling of an eye.

Oh! happy is that empire, kingdom, state, or province; emperor, king, or governor; family, or particular person, whose inhabitants live and dwell in the holy fear of God, and in the self-denying life of Jesus: no greater happiness or felicity, than to be one of these. Oh! let my soul dwell here, and be in unity and fellowship with all such for ever.

Now, as to the *third, and last part* of the abovesaid *three-fold* argument, viz. *Example*; which, as the proverb says, is *above precept*. Good example is very taking with many, and oft happens to be very affecting to the younger sort more particularly: for they look out much at others, and take great notice

of the words and conduct of their elders and superiors. Good *Jacob* was a good example to his great family, *Gen. xxvii. &c.* He was a pious affectionate father, a loving husband, a faithful servant, and an obedient son: the history of his life and travels in holy scripture is affecting: oh! how he sought God betimes! how humble, how lowly, as well as lovely, doth he behave himself in his pilgrimage: his father and mother called him, and bid him go: he does it, without any replies to the contrary; nor like some of the youth of this age. And on his way, being benighted, he lays himself down, his pillow was hard, but his bed large, and the heavens was his curtain; his sleep was sweet, and his dream precious. (Oh! the very great thoughts of it affects me at this time.) In which sleep he sees angels; and when he awakes, he says, *Surely this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.* Now he makes the conditions of his covenant with his Maker, which (as to outward things) was as small as well could be, *viz. Bread to eat, and raiment to put on, and the presence of his Maker, with his blessing.* This was now when he was about to set up for himself in the world, his mind was not high: neither sought he after great things; notwithstanding which, the Almighty gave him in abundance. So onwards he went, and came to *Lahai* and became his servant. I could wish that all young people, that are servants, would follow his steps in faithfulness; then might they be a blessing to their masters, as he was to his. I ever observed in my travels (having travelled much in divers nations, and made many observations) that almighty God hath greatly blessed obedient and industrious children and servants: which observation, I hope will be of good use to the world, if well considered. And on the other hand, I have taken notice of the contrary, and have perfectly understood, that God's hand hath been

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manifestly against those that have been disobedient, and ill-natured, and idle; which may be an useful caution to all. Now the Lord blessed the good service, and faithful industry, of this his servant with great increase; as also with many children, for whom he was concerned as a tender father, even to the very last: and (like a pious and godly father) pray'd to the Lord for their preservation; and was zealously concerned to cleanse his family from superstition and idolatry; and calls them to go up to *Bethel*, or the house of God. Oh! that all heads of families would be concern'd for their posterity, and seek God, and the things of his kingdom, for their children and servants, more than the things of this world; there being too much care for the one, and too little for the other, generally speaking: so that there is need of this caution. Now this good man was not only concerned for his family in his life, but even at his death also: for he, waiting for the salvation of God, and being sensible of it, very livingly and sensibly blessed his seed, and was opened in faith to speak exactly to each of their states and conditions. I refer to the history of it in holy scripture, the which I believe will be affecting to pious minds. Oh! what a race he left behind! all his twelve sons were patriarchs, and great fathers of many people, who were highly favoured of God, and hath been to this day, had they walked in the steps of their fathers *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*: from whom came many valiant and noble men, of and for God; as *Moses*, *Jeshua*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Josiah*, *Elijah* and *Elisha*; also the holy blessed *Star*, and *Sun of righteousness*, holy JESUS whom the degenerate offspring of good old *Israel* slew and hanged on a tree: also the holy apostles, were great examples of virtue: also the blessed martyrs, and many modern good men, might be brought in for inviting examples, to stir up the minds of men and women, to serve, love, and follow

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low the Lord, and to believe in him, and in his dear Son, and in the appearance of his grace working in the soul, in order to the convincing and converting of it.

To be particular in all the above instances, would swell this far beyond what is intended ; and considering the many and large volumes that are in the world, though a large door opened before me, yet am now willing to conclude, and recommend the work, with the reader, to the grace of God, in and through his dear Son Christ Jesus, our great example: to whom, with the Father, through the Divine Spirit, be glory forever.

T. C.

Written at *Frederickstadt*, in *Holslein*,
in the year 1709.

Forcing a maintenance, not warrantable from the holy scripture, for a minister of the gospel. Being an answer to some false and erroneous pages, writ by *Joseph Metcalfe*, tending to stir up persecution.

Freely ye have received, freely give, Matt. x. 8.

I have coveted no man's silver or gold, Acts xx. 33.

I have preached the gospel of God freely, 2 Cor. xi. 7.

The PREFACE to the READER, of what persuasion soever.

IT being a known principle of the people called Quakers, that the gospel of Jesus Christ ought to be preached freely by his ministers ; yet, notwithstanding, divers people, of divers persuasions, either for want of charity, or through prejudice, or wrong information, or all three, do say, or believe, that the Quakers ministers or teachers are paid for their preaching ; I do positively declare to the

world,

world, that is an utter falshood and scandal upon the said people : for we cannot in good conscience make a trade of our holy calling, neither is the word of God to be bought or sold for outward gain ; witness the apostle's answer to Simon Magus, Acts viii. 18. 20. And if we cannot pay our own, pray how can we pay others, and be clear of guilt, or have the answer of a good conscience, we believing it to be evil ? And every body that knows the holy scriptures, knows that what is not of faith is sin ; and yet our adversaries would have us commit this sin ; and if we will not do it willingly, they will force it from us by the power of the magistrates, although the holy scriptures and reason is clearly against them, as is plainly manifested in the ensuing little tract.

And as for my part, I have travelled many thousands of miles, and preached the gospel among the said people many years, as thousands of them can witness, and never received any consideration therefor, neither directly nor indirectly ; neither do I reckon they are beholden to me for so doing, for a necessity is laid upon me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel ; neither do I boast, for I have done but my duty, and in that sense am but an unprofitable servant, according as Christ hath taught, for all the profit is of Christ. And if occasion were, there are many other ministers among the said people, could bear the like testimony.

Oh, but (says the people) your teachers are generally rich !

Why should any begrudge us that which we have, since the Almighty blesteth our industry in our honest trades and callings, which other teachers, through the like industry and blessing, might obtain, if their dependancy for a maintenance were more upon God, than the people ?

Yet notwithstanding those teachers receive so much money of the people, and the Quaker preachers none at all (except they are poor and necessitous) they are full of complaints : whereas there is no complaining in all our streets.

We

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We should starve (*cry they*) if we had not a law to compel.

Christ's ministers of old, when he sent them forth, they had no law, and yet they lacked nothing; is Christ or the men changed now-a-days? The men doubtless: for now they cry, more, more, more money: let every true christian judge in this matter.

T. C.

I Shall first take notice of his preface, to one called a *Quaker*, in which he says, "That he thinks that there is sufficient matter of conviction in the texts and arguments improved."

Answer. But every sincere soul, when they come to see the texts themselves, will have cause to think to the contrary; for had they been fairly produced, they would have saved the labour of a further reply, they being far from countenancing any forced maintenance to Christ's ministers. And as for his arguments improved, they smell so strong of perfection, that I would charitably hope no sober christian or magistrate, who inclines to moderation (which ought to appear in all) will take any further notice of them than to pity his ignorance.

Yet notwithstanding his mighty arguments and great improvements, he gives them this blow, "He has but little hopes of his being convinced (to whom he writes) because of the efficacy of error and delusion, &c."

He would have had more reason to have writ so, if he had first proved error and delusion upon himself, and truly, he would have been greatly deluded, if he had believed that great untruth, That forcing a maintenance for a gospel minister was warrantable from the holy scriptures; if he be sober and in his wits, one would believe that he cannot (when he seriously considers of it) but be convinced that he is mistaken.

And

Forcing a maintenance not warrantable. 45

And as for his prayers, the scripture says, *We know that God beareth not sinners*: and that he is a sinner, is plain, in wresting and perverting the scriptures as he has done, and as I shall show, through the help of Christ, my Lord and Saviour.

Forcing a maintenance, not warrantable from the holy scripture, for a minister of the gospel.

NOW, pray let us observe what he says to the matter in hand.

1st. As to the laws of New England, he says, *The laws of this province require that the inhabitants of each town shall take due care to be constantly provided with a gospel minister: and that each minister shall be sufficiently supported and maintained by the inhabitants of the town.*

That all the rateable estates, and the inhabitants in the town shall be assessed, and pay proportionable to such maintenance.

And that such as refuse to pay accordingly, shall have their proportion taken from them by distress.

Answer. I shall not here dispute the injustice of this law so largely as I might (only I must add, they have no such example from Christ nor the apostles, with this proviso, that it is made amongst a society of men for themselves, and those of their own communion) but if this is intended to force those of other professions, and who cannot for conscience sake join with them, believing them to be antichristian ministers (as to be sure all such are as good as to maintain such doctrine as this priest Metcalfe doth, That it is warrantable from scripture to force maintenance for ministers) pray would he be willing the Papists, or Church of England should take away from him by force? Surely no: then I say that it is an unjust law, and far from the nature of that royal law, which

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says, *Do unto all men, as you would that they should do unto you*; Christ says, *This is the law, and the prophets*. And doubtless the gospel falls not short of (though this N. E. minister doth) tho' I hope it is not the mind of all in profession with him. Now the law being unjust, it is no crime to reject it: yet for conscience sake, and the Lord's sake we submit to it in passive obedience; and it is well known to all that know any thing of the Quakers, that their principle is against resisting the outward power.

Next to the Question, *Whether it be warrantable from scripture and the doctrine and practice of Christ and his apostles, to put such laws in execution, to take from men, altho' the minister preaches not to them, if they cannot believe they are sent of God?*

This is his great Question, as he states it in his first page, which he pretends to answer from scripture, but falls far short of it; and goes on thus.

1st. *It is warrantable from scripture, &c. that the inhabitants of each town shall take due care, in order to their being supplied with a gospel minister.*

Answer. This is as foreign from his question, as Rome is from Boston. What is that to the purpose? Let the impartial judge; if he cannot prove a forced maintenance from scripture, he doth nothing to his purpose, nor according to his grand question in his title page, &c.

Then he goes on to his second assertion, and says

2dly, *It is warrantable from scripture, that gospel ministers be honourably supported and maintained: just maintenance is a debt due from the people to the ministers in strict justice, and not as a meer act of charity: for it is the hire of their labour, and the wages of their work.*

Answer, Hereby he owns himself, and all that are in his practice, to be hirelings, tho' he will not allow others to call him or them so; and quotes the texts of scripture to prove it, Luke x. 17. 2 Cor. xi.

3. 1 Cor. ix. 7. 14. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. and adds as falsely, and says,

"The argument which the apostle uses for the Gentiles ministering to the Jews, reaches this case, Rom. xv. 27."

Answer, Surely the man forgets himself, for the apostle only spoke of a free collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, as in the two foregoing verses plainly appears, Ver. 25, *But now I go to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints*, Ver. 26. *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem*. When will our greedy priests take so much care of the poor?

As to the texts of scripture above quoted, I shall take the pains to set them down at large, that the reader may see how they answer his grand question: for what purpose he concealed them (in his) in figures, is best known to himself. Truly if he had set them down at large, it must needs have been plainly manifested, to every body that should read them, that he was in the wrong: for they assert no such thing, as he would have them to prove, viz. a forced maintenance for gospel ministers. The first is *Luke x. 7*: "And in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give (what could be more against him?) for the labourer is worthy of his hire: go not from house to house, and into what city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you." (Where is legal force here?)

Let this man have a care lest he be one of those that are blinded: for he must needs be blind, if he cannot see that this holy text makes not for his purpose but directly against him; here is not a word of legal force. It is so far from it, that they were only to eat what was set before them, if they received them who were true ministers sent of Christ, which yet will be hard work for persecuting priests to prove themselves so; be they of what religion they

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may. Well, what shall we do for this legal force? Why truly we cannot find it in the gospel, or the new-testament. Christ came to fulfil the law, and change the priesthood, and to put an end to carnal ordinances. But it may be *Joseph Metcalf* is an old-testament man (as a certain *N. E.* convert said, on an occasion well known to some of them) if he be, and will follow the letter of the law, he must go to knocking down oxen, and killing of sheep, which work I believe they of his cloth are generally too high for.

The next is *2 Cor. xi. 8.* "I robb'd other churches, taking wages of them to do you service."

Surely can any body be so bold as from this text to say that the apostle made a common practice of preaching for wages, as our modern priests do now a days? I hope no christian will imagine from those words of the apostle, that he was a thief, or sacriligious person, but only a freedom of speech, which he used to those whom he loved, as in *Verse 11.* is plainly expressed. It is a familiar way of expression among ourselves, where we know we may be free, when any thing is given to us from our friend, oh I shall rob thee too much: to put any other construction upon the apostle's words, would be to make the apostle a sacriligious person, and a robber, which is absurd. But pray let him speak fairly a little for himself, and he will wipe off these money loving priests very handsomly. *Verse 7.* *I have,* says he, *preached to you the gospel of God freely.* Oh! that cutting word *freely*, what shall we do with it? Tho' it was so near our legal minister, yet he thought fit not to meddle with it, and in the 9th *Ver.* (just under, as the 7th just above; by which the poor man is hedged in, how he will get out I know not) the apostle says, *And when I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man.* And tells them in the same verse, that he kept him-

self from being burthenfome to them, and that he resolved to keep himself so. We dare all those that preach for hire, and have money for divining, to come to such a resolution, however if they will not come to this good resolution, let them forbear abusing and persecuting those that (by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ) are.

The next is 1 Cor. ix. 7, 14. "Who goeth a warfare at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk thereof? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that those which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel?"

Joseph hath left out what he thought made against it, from the 8th Verse to the 13th, and 15th, where holy Paul says (though he had power to eat and drink, Verse 4. at free cost, yet he doth not say any where, that he had power to take it by force, and we think it ought to be preached from an inward necessity, and not for an outward maintenance) *I have used none of these things, neither have I written of those things, that it should be so done unto me. I wish Joseph Metcalfe, and others in his station, could say so honestly.*

Now I may proceed to say something to each particular above, as it lieth in the holy text.

And, 1st, *Who goeth a warfare at his own charge?* There are some, though very few, I could heartily wish that there were more that would follow his practice that wrote it, who himself was one that did sometimes do it, as there, when he wrought at his lawful calling, and help'd those that were with him: and blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, there are some who do go on in this holy warfare of preaching the gospel in this age of the world at their own charge, who have nothing to boast of neither; for a necessity is laid upon them, and woe is unto them if they preach not the gospel. Though if any be poor, and want help, we have nothing against it, but are for helping of those who
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can give a good account of their calling, and we are so free to do it, that we need no forcing to it, nor no law for it.

2dly, *If he planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?*

Well, he that hath planted a vineyard, let him eat the fruit of it, and welcome; but let him leave other folks vineyards alone, lest he be counted a robber in the worst sense; for if the holy apostle robbed, it was by consent; but these preachers now-a-days rob without consent, even vineyards which they never planted, but would destroy it if they could: oh! high, base, and antichristian practice, with a witness.

3dly, *Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk thereof?* But who feedeth a flock, and milks the flocks of others?

Answer, Antichrist and persecutors, that cannot be content with the milk that their own flocks give, but will needs be milking and fleecing too those poor sheep which cannot in conscience join with them, believing that their way is not the door into the true sheep fold, but that they are climbing up some other way, like thieves and robbers. And because the poor sheep of the true shepherd Jesus Christ, bleat forth those things, those inwardly ravening wolves, who have got only the sheeps cloathing outwardly, being known to be such by their fruits of persecution, will needs put the poor sheep in their pounds, when and where they have power, or else take it by force, that is to say, *legal* forsooth.

4thly, *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they that preach the gospel, shall live of the gospel.*

Yes, he hath ordained that they should live, but not that they should force a living. A blessed ordination, and with holy reverence be it repeated; for and because every true minister of Jesus knows the sweet benefit of it in a two-fold sense. 1st, He hath a holy living for his soul; he is richly fed at his great

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great master's table, with the finest of the wheat; and as with the holy honey, or sweetness of the word of eternal life, which is strength to him in weakness, riches to him in poverty, and joy and peace to him in persecution, which the world, and all the persecutors therein, can never take away from him; blessed be God in Christ for ever

2dly, As to his bodily living, if he be a true man, and not a lover of filthy lucre, or gain, he will have cause to say, as his great master's servants did of old, that he lacked nothing, especially if his call is from God and Christ, and not from man or money. Oh! this money that is a loud call indeed to our men-made ministers: if at any time there chance to be two calls, I always observed that the highest bidder carried the priest. But where shall we find that the Lord hath ordained that a minister shall have fifty or an hundred pounds *per annum* (in all the holy records) for preaching the gospel? No, our great high priest said to his, *Freely ye have received, freely give*. But if it had been his mind, he could as well, and with as great and as good authority as any of these men, have said, If they will not give it you freely, take it by force. But those forcers know not of what spirit they are of; if they do, they must needs be the greater hypocrites, and so their condemnation the greater.

Gal. vi. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.*

Yes, let those which these men teach, communicate to them; for communicate and legal force are words of different signification. I hope by this time this preacher's eyes will be opened to see his error, in pleading for legal, forced maintenance, especially from Christ's and the apostles practice and doctrine, as recorded in the holy scriptures.

The next text which he quotes, is 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. "Let the elders which rule well, be counted worthy

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worthy of double honour, especially they which labour in the word and doctrine ; for the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and the labourer is worthy of his reward."

Very well, what is this to his legal force ? Here is nothing of it ; those that rule well, will not force any body, nor set the magistrates upon their backs, because they cannot conform to their ways ; those must be antichristian teachers for certain, being opposite to Christ : for he indeed was persecuted, but never persecuted any, nor forced any, tho' it was in his power ; for which reason we cannot give those men that double honour which they desire ; and for those who say they labour in the word and doctrine of our meek Lord, to set the magistrates upon us is wicked ruling, instead of ruling well.

And as for the poor ox that treads out the corn, I am far from having him muzzled : but when he bites, and with his horns pushes the sheep, and tramples the growing green corn to dirt, I think then he ought to be muzzled and hopped too.

In his second page he says, " 3dly, It is the duty of every inhabitant in a town to pay proportionable towards ministers maintenance."

Ans. No, if they were not all of one perswasion (and if they were all one perswasion, he hath no such precedent from Christ nor the apostles to force, neither legal nor illegal) and are not free in the choice of such minister : he runs too fast there, without he is popishly inclined, to persecute every body into his perswasion, which has been too much the practice of some of the N. E. magistrates and ministers. I may not here forget, though I forgive the salutation of a certain person, when I first entred the streets of their metropolis of N. E. " Oh (says he) what a pity it was that they did not hang all the Quakers when they hanged the other four." Remark-

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markable was the answer that one of his neighbours made him, "I wonder you are not ashamed to say so; for you know that the judgments of God have been on our country ever since." I mention this as a caution to the *N. E.* ministers, that they would teach their people more manners to their neighbours, and to strangers; and to let them know, that sometimes the above named people cannot be quiet in their solemn meetings for the worship of Almighty God, in their chief town of *Boston*; which, as I understand, is very much owing to lies and reproaches which the people have from their priests and pulpits. All which is a shame to moderate christians; some of which, of all persuasions, I hope there are in the country and territories of *New England*.

For first, says he, "None were exempted of old from paying of tithes for the maintenance of the ministry."

By his leave, he is mistaken, for those that did not join with them in circumcision were exempted.

"2dly, Every hearer ought to pay proportionable towards the maintenance of the preacher, *Gal. vi. 6*. And every inhabitant ought to be a hearer (what against their conscience?) for it is sin to forsake the assembling themselves together, *Heb. x, 25*. And one sin can never excuse another."

Ans. If I should ask him, he being a Presbyterian; whether it be a sin to forsake the assemblies of the Papists, or church of *England*, Baptists or Quakers, and come to theirs; I presume he would say no: then to what a non-plus he has brought himself and brethren, especially in *Old England*, for forsaking the church, and setting up meetings of their own: truly he has made them all sinners in so doing; I do not know how his brethren in *N. E.* will resent it; but I dare say his brethren in *O. E.* will give him no thanks for this unlucky turn; how he will excuse himself in this sin of ignorance I know not. Would

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not this have been a topping writer for the Papists when they burn the protestants for not coming to church?

3dly, In page 2d he says, "The apostle directs in acts of charity, that every one contribute in proportion as God hath prospered him, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. And that there should be equality, every one bearing their equal proportion of such a burthen, 2 Cor. viii. 13, 14." He goes on, "Much more ought there to be a proportion or equality observed in the maintenance of the ministry, which is a matter of communicative justice; so it was under the law, and so it should be under the gospel."

Ans. Notwithstanding these priests will bring those texts of holy scripture, that tend to promote charity to the poor, and many instances out of antient authors for stirring up charity to the poor; yet they will not, when it comes to their case, allow it be a charity, but a debt; as saith our author in his first page: and *J. Mather*, in a little book set forth to promote the maintenance of their ministers, in which I observe he tells them, "If they will stand to the old law of the *Jews*, they must have but a tenth of the tenth;" which I suppose will not satisfy those men that have hire for preaching, and money for divining: and therefore I think it their best way, to let the *Jews* old law alone, and take to the new law and covenant of our great Lord Jesus.

And further, if they will bring instances of charity to the poor out of the scripture, and other authors, let them be just, and always when they would make the application of it to the ministry, to put honestly the word *poor* before ministry; viz. poor priest, poor minister; otherwise let them let fall their argument for charity for the poor) which no good christian will go about to dispute against) and see what their arguments for justice in the case will do for them. They say it is a just debt, a matter of

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communicative justice ; but when people do not see cause to commune with them, but quite the contrary, and buy none of their ware or merchandize, pray what justice is there in this ? Why truly none, but a great deal of injustice.

4thly, He says, " If any man fail of doing his just proportion, he thereby exposes either the minister to lose so much of his just due (but he falls short of proving it a just due) or the other inhabitants to pay more than their just proportion, and so he is guilty of manifest wrong and injustice."

No, where the people are not consenting (and if they were consenting, the new testament is silent to any such way of maintaining gospel ministers) to this proportion, but see an evil in it ; and there is no force under the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as I have abundantly and clearly (to those who are not blinded) proved above, even from the very texts of scripture which he brings and wrests to prove the contrary, of which let the impartial judge. Thus he and they building their superstructure of maintenance upon a bad foundation, *viz.* Legal force, it will fall to the ground, if the magistrates do not help ; for whose help he calls very loud, and well he may, considering he and others of his mind are ready to faint and fall without it. But by what hath been said, I would charitably hope, all moderate christian magistrates will take care that the preachers eat only the grapes of their own vine, and the milk of their own flock, and keep so far just as to let other folks grapes and milk alone. But if the priests and magistrates will join together in persecution, then will we poor sufferers appeal from them to our great high Priest, and just Judge of heaven and earth, and through his grace patiently suffer what he shall please to permit to come upon us.

5thly, In his 3d page he says, "The public ministry of the gospel in any town is a public privilege, and every inhabitant is considered therein, and partakes in the privilege: for the preaching of the gospel is the great engine of salvation, and means of faith, *Rom. i. 16 x. 17.*"

If he means that there is no other preaching the gospel but from this sect, we openly declare to the world, that we differ from him in our judgment, and we believe upon good grounds too. And what gospel, or glad tidings (which the word imports) can that be to the people to preach to them, *That a certain number of them are eternally ordained for damnation*; and for ought these knowing men know, they may themselves be some of them; for they cannot tell who these damned ones are. I think it would be abundantly better if those prying ministers would let the secret will of Him that made them alone; for that belongs to God, and not to man. *The revealed truths belong to us, and our children.* And to tell people they can never be free from the act of sin while in this world, is really miserable news, and dreadful tidings indeed; since sin is the cause of God's wrath and damnation, and since we cannot in conscience join with such anti-gospel ministers, they ought not in conscience to take our money or goods from us.

Again he says, "Every one is invited to take of the water of life freely," *Rev. xxvi. 17.*

But, by their leave, theirs is the water of death, if we must always sin even in our best duties, then he knows, that *the wages of sin is death*; and may not any good christians be truly thankful when they are delivered from such a sinful ministry? And what a knock he gives himself in saying, *We take of it freely*, and his pages are writ on purpose to make people believe they ought to pay for it, and that they may force it from them too. So we may plainly see that their waters, which proceed from them in

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such bitter streams, are the waters of death; because we cannot have them freely, according to the doctrine of the holy Ghost in the holy scriptures, which he himself hath brought.

Again, whereas he says, "Where there is no vision, or preaching the gospel, the people perish, *Prov. xxix. 18.*"

This is contrary to what they say, when they teach that vision and revelation is ceased.

He goes on, "Being without God, without Christ, without the covenant, they are in a hopeless, perishing condition."

If he would infer from these words, that where there is no public vocal teaching the people perish, the Almighty has been kinder than this minister; for he has graciously promised, that he would teach his people himself: *The children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, &c. And thine eyes shall behold thy teachers, who cannot be removed into a corner, Isa. xxx. 20.* which cannot be meant of outward preachers, for they are often removed into corners; but God, Christ and the holy Spirit, cannot. And Christ promises to send the spirit of truth, which should lead and guide into all truth (not into sin.) Now to say that such who have not outward vocal preaching perish, is absurd; and he must want charity, and then all his harangues in his pulpit are but like sounding brass.

But now, says he, "Where the kingdom of God is preached, every man is at liberty, and hath an opportunity to be pressing into it" (*and I add, without paying for it*) *Luke xvi. 16.* "But where the kingdom of satan is preached (*which is sin term of life*) the people have time to fly from it." Further he says, "If any refuse the counsel of God against themselves, it is their own fault."

Ans.

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Ans. If any do so it is their own fault indeed; but to refuse the evil counsel of a sinful minister, is a virtue, and no fault at all.

Again, "They have a price put in their own hand, although being fools they have no heart to improve it."

We are willing to be counted fools by such wisdomlings; but let him know, that Wisdom himself said, *He that will be wise must first become a fool.*

He proceeds, and says, "It was a privilege to them that were invited to the marriage of the King's Son, though they made light of the invitation, and would not come, *Matt. xxii.*"

Ans. Those that rightly come to the marriage of the King's Son, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, must put off the garment spotted with the flesh, lest it be said to them, *Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having on the wedding garment?* Let every true christian fear, lest he bring on himself that awful sentence, *Depart from me all ye that work iniquity, I know you not;* notwithstanding they had eat and drank in his presence, and in his name they had cast out devils, and done many wondrous works, and he had taught in their streets; yet nevertheless, because they were found in the acts of sin they must depart from him.

Now, says he, "Every inhabitant partaking in the public privilege of a gospel ministry, reason and justice requires, that every one should bear a part of the external charge, in order to the maintenance of it."

Ans. But every person not partaking of what he calls so, and believing that, as these erroneous priests preach it, to be a bondage, and not a privilege; to force such to pay too, is altogether unreasonable, and great injustice; let all sensible christians judge.

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Ans. We want him, or any of his brethren to shew us that warrant from holy scripture; for he hath not done it yet: and where shall we find that it is warrantable from scripture, and the doctrine and practice of Christ and his apostles? For what he has produced from holy scripture has fairly proved the contrary; and as for his *legality*, that great word, 'tis only what others of his spirit have pleaded in former ages. Did not *Nebuchadnezzar* persecute the servants of God by a law? Could not they say they suffered legally? Did not the *Jews* say concerning our Lord, *We have a law, and by that law he ought to die*? Did not the people of *Massachusetts* make a law, and by it hang the poor innocent *Quakers*? Did not all those say, that those suffered legally? And do not some of the *N. E.* ministers justify it in their pulpits to this day, though others there are (I believe) really sorry for it?

Ob but (say our modern teachers, who have money for it) *we hope you will not compare us christians to Jews and Heathens.*

Why not, if found in their practices? For when once people go to persecute others for their conscientious dissent, it is most certain they go from the spirit of Christ, as may fairly be proved from Christ's own expressions; and doubtless all persecutors are antichrists, notwithstanding their fine gilding of it over with words, *Legal distress*, and *prosecution*.

In his fourth page he begins thus, "For it is a just and legal debt, as has already been proved" (to those that agree to it, and contract it, he should have added.)

Ans. But unjust and illegal to those that cannot for conscience sake consent to it, and therefore 'tis a mistake in him to say, 'It has already been proved;' for he hath not, nor can prove it (to force any by a

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coercive power) to be consonant to the holy scriptures.

In page the 4th he says, 'God has given his ministers a just right to some proportion of every man's estate, in the place where they minister.'

What, *Jews, Heathens*, and all? What every man whatsoever? Where proves he that? For my part, if I were a minister for money; I should think that what I got from other people against their wills, would never prosper, but would be a curse to, and upon me, and tend to the consumption of the rest of my estate, rather than augmenting of it: and I have heard some moderate ministers, who have money for their preaching say the same.

He goes on further, and says, 'And that part of each man's estate, which God gives ministers a right to by his just and equal law.'

Ans. By his just and equal Gospel he forces none; but leaves every one to be fully perswaded in their own minds.

And he must needs say, *That the gospel power exceeds the power of any law whatsoever.*

And the gospel is free; not forced, as he in vain would endeavour to prove from holy scripture. That must be an unjust law that forces people to buy, whether they will or no, and therefore none of God's law or way; for all his laws and ways are equal.

And he also says in page the 4th, 'They have as much power to challenge it as any other debt or wages.'

Not without people agree with them, and hire them. (And though they do agree with them, I do not grant that they have any colour from the new-testament to make any such law, even among themselves; it being inconsistent with the nature of the glorious gospel of Christ.) Upon which a passage comes into my mind between an *Indian* and a *N. E.* minister,

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minister, well known to some of their teachers in New-England, who (for preaching) took from a dissenter from the Presbyterian way one of his cows; the Indian asked him why he did so? The priest answered, *If I hired you to make a fence for me, would you not expect your wages? Yes (says the Indian) but he no hire you; and when me do man's work, then man pay me; but when you do God's work, then God pay you.*

The poor Indian was in the right, for truly God's pay is better than all the silver and gold in the world.

O but, say they, how must we live?

If they had faith in God and Christ, they need not fear a living in this world.

But, say they, The people are so hard-hearted, that if there were not a law for it, the ministers might starve.

Then their doctrine must starve the peoples souls; or else surely they would not let their bodies starve: that must needs be a lifeless, dull, dead ministry, that will not open peoples hearts, so as to keep the preachers from starving; but I think there is no fear of their starving, for they generally live like lords among the people. But let them remember withal, that they are not to lord it over the heritage of God.

'It is, says he, agreeable to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, that such as refuse to pay their just debts, should be distrained for the same, by virtue of the civil sword amongst christians, Rom. xiii. 14.'

Ans. He should first prove the debt to be just; and then this text would have been to his purpose: for those that contract debts, ought to pay them.

In page the 5th, he talks of the law and light of nature, and reason, and says, *'It is the law of God written in the heart, Rom. ii. 15.'* He adds, *'All the laws of God do sweetly harmonize both one with another; and the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; there is no manner of jarr between any of these.'*

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Ans. But there is a wonderful jarr between the corrupt nature or law of man, and the divine nature or law of God; he should have distinguished between the corrupt nature, reason and law, and the divine; for except he rightly divides between the precious and the vile; he cannot be as the mouth of God to the people. Now the corrupt and covetous nature in those that seek their gain from their quarter, and preach for hire, and divine for money, says, 'That those that cannot pay them' (tho' for conscience sake) 'they must be forced to it, whether they will or no.'

But the divine nature of Christ and his apostles says, *Freely ye have received, freely give.* Matt. x. 8. If their gospel is not free, they have not received it from Christ. Also if they have not received it freely, they may call it their own gospel, but it is not Christ's. And tho' Christ's ministers had power to eat and drink, and to forbear working, yet says the divine nature in the apostle, *I have used none of those things; neither do I write, that it should be so done unto me,* 1 Cor. ix. 15. And that is not covetousness, that divers Quakers to called, cannot pay the covetous priests, is manifest; for they take much more, and sometimes double and treble, as I could easily bring many instances and living witnesses to prove what I assert, from *Virginia, Maryland,* and abundantly in *New England* (without going over to *Great Britain*) in which many thousands of pounds have these legal ministers taken by force, within these fifty years, from such as for conscience sake, could not put it into their mouths; and then war has been proclaimed against those poor sheep. Well let the righteous judge, not the self righteous (I do not mean them) but those which are cloathed upon with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as he wrought it outwardly for them, and also as he works it by his holy spirit, in their hearts.

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Next to his 3dly, Touching government and magistrates, which the people called *Quakers* ever owned and honoured in their way, though they could not cringe, scrape and bow, after the common mode of the sinful times, nor give titles to them in flattery: but we reckon that those magistrates that are a terror to hypocrites and evil-doers, ought to have a hearty inward respect and honour shown to them generously in action and courteous expression, and not in a parcel of idle compliments. Such magistrates as the above, were never a terror unto us, but we have blessed God on their behalf in our solemn assemblies publicly, and also often in the secret of our souls privately; and many times prayed for our persecutors also. I wish this priest be not too much inclining to such. May his eyes be opened!

He goes on, and endeavours to animate and stir up the magistrates to persecution, by insinuating, that those who for conscience sake cannot give any thing to the priest, are evil, unjust and wicked persons; who, notwithstanding, take them in a general way, and their conversations are as just as the brightest of their church members, as divers of themselves are forced to acknowledge.

If for this testimony to our innocency, any should imagine we boast, it is he, and such as he, that are the occasion of this confident boasting, and we have our great apostle, even *Paul*, for our example.

Now I hope the magistrates will take care not to persecute the just, but to turn the edge of their swords against the evil-doers; and then doubtless they will not bear their swords in vain, and let the edge of it be as sharp and keen as it will, we fear it not: for against true men there is no law (which is upon a just bias or foundation) that will harm them.

I tenderly and lovingly, as a minister of Jesus Christ, and true lover of good government, exhort and warn all magistrates to be careful to keep within
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their own province: for *conscience* is none of theirs; it is the peculiar province of Jesus Christ; the great territory of the King of kings, and Judge of the quick and the dead; and he will render unto every man a recompence.

Now if conscience were only a cloak for covetousness, it ought to be stript off, but it is plain that cannot be our case: for we lose much more by our denial (and sometimes a great deal more, than as much more) by our not paying freely, as is above said. But we may (I hope) presume that the magistrates know their duty, without being taught it from the pulpit: I would have no free-spirited magistrate to let priests ride them: for if they do, it is to be doubted they will ride them to death: for persecuting men of their cloth, seem to have but little mercy. I once heard a priest say to a couple of justices (a *clergy* of England preacher for money, but as himself said to some of his neighbours, a *Presbyterian* in his heart) *Do your office*, which was upon my poor self, who had been preaching against sin and evil, according to the best of my understanding (why what's the matter?) *He has been preaching*, says the priest, *in a place not licensed, and has broke the law.* Well, says another justice beside the aforesaid two, *Then you have broke the law first, for you preached there before him*, and tho' it was our meeting by appointment, yet we quietly heard him read his sermon, and I dare say, he never had quieter hearers in all his days than we were.

And indeed reading is the general practice of some modern teachers, far from the practice of Christ, the apostles, and primitive christians, when christianity shone in its primitive beauty and glory, and when christians depended more upon the gift of the holy Ghost (or Spirit) and less upon natural parts and human inventions, which is worthy of the solid consideration of all true christians.

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I have also observed that those magistrates which have joined with persecuting priests in persecuting men of sober lives and conversations for their religious dissent and perswasion, that they have not prospered; and many sober people not of our society, have taken notice of the same. This is offered to the serious consideration of men of high degree (in reverence and great humility.)

And tho^s *J. M.* flatters the magistrates, telling them they bear the visible image and character of gods, in order to flatter them into a persecuting spirit, yet I hope, and believe, that he will not find many magistrates nor ministers of his mind: for if all the magistrates and ministers in *N. E.* were as much for persecution as he seems to be by his writing, what might all those expect, who differ from the *Presbyterian* way in *N. E.* if they had power? But blessed be God, I certainly know that there are divers moderate people, who are against persecution, even amongst the *Presbyterians* in *New England*.

In his page 7th, he says, 'In case of the peoples defect in this matter (of paying for preaching) legal compulsion is the only remedy (What no other remedy?) and must be used, otherwise religion, which is a peoples life, will soon fall to the ground.'

Ans. Where will his doctrine land? What cannot Christ uphold his church without the magistrates? The religion of Christ, the apostles, and primitive christians, stood, and stands yet without being supported by the civil magistrates. What has he got some new religion, which cannot stand without the outward power? But it seems some of the *N. E.* ministers reckon that they must fall, if the magistrates do not uphold them. They (i. e. the magistrates) are, says *J. M.* the keepers of both tables.

Ans. But I thought that God had been the keeper of his people, and Christ the Shepherd of his sheep,
and

66 *Forcing a maintenance not warrantable.*

and the holy Ghost the *Comforter* of them ; I thought this infinite Being had been the great Preserver of men in religion.

In his 8th page he brings divers texts of scripture to prove the power of the magistrates, which we never denied, especially when he exercises his power and authority to the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well. And at the latter end of the said page *he says*, ' From the whole I conclude, with submission to better judgments, that it is warrantable from scripture, and agreeable to the doctrine and practice of Christ and his apostles, for the laws aforesaid to be put in execution.'

Ans. But alas ! this is all beside his assertion ; his business was to prove a legal forced maintenance for gospel ministers, or else he doth nothing. What ! hath he been travelling through all his pages, and brought forth nothing but this windy doctrine at last ! He speaks of submission to better judgments, and I would have him, if he dare to do it, submit to the judgment of Christ and his apostles, who I think have fairly decided the question in favour of the poor abused *Quakers*, That it is not according, but contrary to the language of the holy Ghost, in the holy scripture, that gospel ministers maintenance should be forced by a coercive power. From what has been said, let all ingenuous christian readers judge.

In page the 9th, ' Nevertheless, *says he*, if any arguments can be produced from scripture, or right reason, of greater strength and weight to prove the negative, than there may be to maintain the affirmative ; I hope I shall readily subscribe thereto'

Ans. A body would from those expressions almost hope for a recantation from him, especially if he seriously considers the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, as here noted at large.

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Forcing a maintenance not warrantable. 67

‘ But, *saiſt he*, till I receive further light, conſcience commands me to conform to that meaſure I have.’

Anſ. He had beſt to have a care of the commanding power of an evil conſcience.

He goes on, ‘ And while I do conſcientiouſly conform to that meaſure of light within me, walking in obedience to all its commands and directions.’

Anſ. But ſuppoſe that light in him ſhould be darkneſs, then as Chriſt ſaid, *How great is that darkneſs?* As for certain, it is, when he goes about to prove that for truth which is contrary to Chriſt’s doctrine.

As to his ſaying, ‘ Then the *Quakers* muſt let fall the grand article of their religion.’

Anſ. Let him ſeriouſly read over the firſt chapter of *John*, as alſo many other places of the holy ſcripture on that ſubject of the *Light*, and if he is not one of thoſe which are blinded, perhaps he may be undeceived, and his groſs miſtake rectified. I hope he is careful of preaching ſuch doctrine in his pulpit.

A certain church member of the *Presbyterian* way in *N. E.* told me that their miniſter told them in his pulpit, *That we denied the bible, or holy ſcriptures.* And made the poor woman really believe it to be true, than which, nothing could be more falſe; but the honeſt woman thought ſhe would try me. *Was you,* ſays ſhe, *brought up among Quakers?* *Was your father and mother Quakers?* Yes, ſaid I, they were ſo called. *And,* ſays ſhe, *would they ſuffer you to read in the bible when you were a little boy?* Yes, and correct me too, becauſe I was not ſo willing to do it as they would have me to be.

Thus have the poor *Quakers* been abuſed in divers pulpits in *N. E.* and other places, for which reaſon, I would give this chriſtian advice, to all profeſs’d chriſtian miniſters in *N. E.* and elſewhere, wherever this may meet with them, who have abuſed us, that for the time to come they, do not tell the people in their pulpits

pulpits, that the *Quakers* deny Christ, the scriptures, the power of the magistrates, and many other things, which would make a volume of themselves, if they were all penned. For them to cry out in their pulpits, *Have a care of the delusions of the Quakers*, and at the same time to delude the people to believe lies of them is really horrid.

Obbut, say they, *the Quakers are more orthodox now than they were* (when in truth it is the calumnies that have been cast on us, are now made more manifest to be falsehoods.) And then ought not they to be glad at the news of our reformation?

T. C.

NOW I shall consider his *postscript*, in writing of which he has dip't his pen deep in the gall or bitterness in some parts of it, which I shall touch a little upon, as I shall come to them.

But to begin, 'Notwithstanding; *says he*, all that I have said in the preceding discourse concerning maintenance: yet as to my own particular, if a temporal maintenance had been my chief aim, I should have discovered great folly in accepting a call from so small and poor a people.'

Ans. From his words, one may conclude it was his aim, tho' not his chief aim; and then as to the shepherd's call, ought it not to be from the great shepherd Jesus Christ? And if they will answer this call, he says, *Go forth*. Where do we find any example for a minister of the gospel, to stay and preach to only one particular congregation? Pray let them produce it if they can.

But now suppose a place should present to *J. M.* where the people were richer and more of them; would he not leave his poor flock, to go to the rich? Pray let him have a care, as he says, that his own heart do not deceive him: we but too plainly perceive, by the practice of those money ministers;

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that the loudest call is the most money. I query, upon this great word *call*, whether the sheep use to call the shepherd, or the shepherd the sheep? Do not they strangely invert the order of nature here in their pretended call from the people? Christ the true shepherd said, *My sheep hear my voice*. So that he and his servants, or ministers, call the sheep, and not the sheep them; and those holy shepherds called their sheep freely, though these must have money for their calling, and the sheep call them too: neither will that satisfy some of those shepherds, but they will needs have money from some poor sheep that never called them; and if they cannot give it them freely they will have it by force. A young shepherd said to one at *Salem* in *N. E.* *That tho' Paul had power, and did not use it, yet he would use his power*. But that blessed apostle never pretended to any forceable power; except the force and power of love.

He, the said *J. M.* complains of his small income for preaching, and of his poverty; tho' it is probable he has more than all the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, when they were sent forth by their great Lord and Master; and to be sure he has more money for preaching, than they all had. But he has confessed his call is not divine, therefore not from Christ; for he says, 'If he had a divine call, he could forego every thing in the world.' And so he is but a legal literal preacher, and minister: a minister that forces himself to offer, and would also force those who receive not his offering to pay him, tho' against their conscience.

And as for his family's starving, I never heard nor read of any christian minister's family's starving; especially in a christian country; nor I believe he nor any body else. Certainly there is need to cry out to those men, *O ye of little faith! who cloaths the lillies, and feeds the sparrows, shall not he take care of you?*

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O ye of little faith! I fear they forget the doctrine of him, whom they sometimes call the Lord.

As to what he writes in his second of his postscript, if he duly minds what I have writ in answer to his, I think he cannot imagine that the flaming vengeance there poured out by him upon us, can any way touch us; but let him and them which are concerned in this work (for I understand he had the help of a cunning man in this work) have a care, that it fall not on themselves: and truly the poor *Quakers* may be truly thankful that the flaming sword is not in their hands; for if it were, experience, yea, woful experience, hath taught us that we might expect but little mercy from some of them. And pray why cannot they be more patient, since they hold that God hath ordained whatever comes to pass? for they see it come to pass that we cannot join with them, cannot they let the ordinance of God alone? I remember an expression of *Cotton Matther* in one of his scurrilous pieces, that the best way to deal with the *Quakers*, was to let them alone. Then, according to *C. M.* this man, and he that helped him, has taken the worst way to deal with us: and truly they lose ground generally when they meddle with us.

As for his foolish pity and bitter lamentation over us, we desire that they would lament over themselves and their children, as our Saviour did over the *Jews* when they persecuted; and truly those who justify their fore-fathers in hanging the *Quakers*, and their other way, of so bitterly persecuting them as they did, had not only need to lament, but repent too. And even now they prove themselves to be the persecutors (and not we) by forcing their maintenance from us. The *Presbyterians* in *O. E.* alias *Great Britain*, they are one with us in this doctrine, that forcing a maintenance for ministers from them that do not hear them, is altogether wrong and unjust: and how comes it to pass, that the same people are otherwise minded in *New-England*? Let them resolve this question.

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I shall consider those texts of scripture which he has thrown at us (and gently return them unto him again.)

At the end of his postscript he says, 'The judgments of God are a great deep.' (Yes too deep for his legal literal buckets to fetch them up) Rom. xi. 7. *The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

I hope he will give the Almighty leave to elect whom he pleaseth. Were the election in the power of this priest, let the reader judge whether we might expect any of it.

He cites 2 Cor. iv. 3. *If our gospel be hid, it is hid to those that are lost.*

Ans. Now why did this priest hide the fourth and next verse, was it not for fear the light of the Quakers doctrine should shine unto people? Which is thus (the fourth verse opening and explaining the third) *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; lest the Light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* Or as in the 6th verse, *For God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* He thought good to hide this gospel, but I think good to make it manifest, which puts me in mind of a proverb, *Who is so blind as those that will not see?*

He goes on, 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12. *They received not the love of truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* And Jude 8, 10, 11, 12, 13. *These filthy dreamers despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities, but speak evil of these things which they know not; woe unto them, clouds*

72 *Forcing a maintenance not warrantable.*

they are without water, raging waves, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

To all which I answer, *1st*, We have received the truth in the love of it, the holy Spirit bearing witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God: which holy witness, is stronger for us, than the witness of ten thousand priests can be against us.

2dly, So the cause being taken away, the effect of delusion ceaseth.

And *3dly*, Pray let them be careful of deluding themselves and the people, by keeping them in ignorance and darkness: telling them, they cannot be cleansed from sin, while here in this world. For all those that believe this, do believe a lie with a witness, and are strangely and strongly deluded. This is a miserable gospel, contrary to the doctrine of the holy apostles, who are positively opposite to that evil tenet. If (says the apostle) *we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.* And Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and to save his people from their sin. And pray beware of taking pleasure in pleading for unrighteousness.

4thly, As to these *filthy dreamers*, pray be careful what you dream in your pulpits to the people; for some of you will not allow of the immediate operation of the holy Ghost; wherefore beware of filthy dreams, and old wives fables.

5thly, We despise not those who are dignified in truth, and rule well in the church (not with rigour and persecution) and we account them worthy of double honour; but persecutors are not so much as worthy of single honour, and we should be but hypocrites to give it them.

6thly, And what *celestial rain*, or *holy divine water*, is there in those cloudy dark preachers, who preach

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damnation to the greatest part of the world? Let them look to it, and repent in time.

7thly, *Raging waves, foaming out their own shame.*

Ans. If persecution is not the fruits of rage and shame, I don't know what is. Pray courteous reader judge.

8thly, *Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*

Now because many cast this text in our teeth, I shall write a little to it, thus; this must be intended to those who wander from the holy Spirit, gift and grace of God, in themselves, by and from which every true minister of Christ ought to exercise his gift, and not to speak when, where, and what he pleases: O happy world! if all professing to be christian ministers did not wander from this gift into the inventions and traditions of men. And further, this cannot be taken in an outward sense, because Christ himself and his apostles travelled much, and said, *Take us for examples; follow us, as we have followed Christ.* And all that know any thing of letters, know that the word *apostle* signifies a messenger, which necessarily implies a traveller; and divers of these blessed ones had no certain dwelling-place. Our dear Lord himself had not whereon to lay his head, as himself says; and those who conscientiously travel to turn people from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the power of God, and are instrumental to turn many to righteousness, notwithstanding all men can do to blacken them, yet the holy text says, *Dan. viii. 2, 3, They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever.* Amen.

A. D. 1713.

T. C.

Some

Some observations on CHRIST's sermon on
the mount.

*If ye love me, keep my commandments, John xiv. 15.
Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,
John xv. 14.*

The PREFACE to the reader.

CH RIST being the great author of the christian religion, I have thought to make some observations on his sermon which he preached on the mount, Matt. v. vi. vii. might be acceptable to some of his followers; especially such who desire to fulfil his will, and not to rest satisfied in a form and shew only of his religion.

And also considering that it is the greatest collection of his words left us in the new-testament by the evangelists in any one place, I was in hopes that some observations thereon might tend to promote the reading of it in the holy scriptures.

But the greatest end I had in this undertaking was, that the professors of the name of holy J E S U S might live and walk in his truth, and in the doctrine which he has there laid down for his followers to practise; and that in so doing, they might have peace to their souls here, and rest in the kingdom of glory for ever.

It is by some accounted and look'd upon in youth to be a commendable and worthy practice to write down sermons, and to copy, and read them over: and, I believe, it will be generally acknowledged, that there was never any sermon preached in the world, that can be compared with this of Christ, which he preached in the mount, and is recorded by the evangelist Matthew, in his 5th, 6th, and 7th, chapters; which if our young und rising generation would often read, and sometimes write it down (if time would admit) but be sure to take care to practise it; this would be truly noble in them; and which if they find they want inward strength to perform, then that they would

ask it in secret at the hand of the almighty JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting strength; and 'tis recorded in holy scripture, that he gives liberally, and upbraideth not, James i. 5. He will not upbraid thee because thou art but a child, or tender in years: oh therefore, seek him betimes! for it is written, They who seek him early, they shall find him, James i. 5. Psal. xxxiv. Prov. io. viii. 17.

The christian religion being run into many divisions and subdivisions, this holy sermon, if christians would walk according to it, might and would help to heal their differences, and to soften them in their sentiments one of another. And 'tis to be believed and hoped, that all parties will confess, that the doctrine in this sermon is good, and ought to be promoted amongst all who profess the worthy name of the Lord Jesus; and whoever walks contrary to this rule must needs be in the wrong.

The general end of preachers is, or should be, to have their doctrine taken notice of, and put in practice; and this being counsel from the Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God (and Saviour) the everlasting Father, and Prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6. we should take more than ordinary notice of it.

Considering also, that he not only spake his doctrine, but lived in it; and not only lived in, but died in it, and for it, and us also. Wherefore we are deeply engaged to hear him with an obedient heart and ear. This (says the voice from the most excellent glory) is my beloved son, hear ye him, Matt. iii. 17. And Moses, the man of God, says, That he that will not hear him, shall be destroyed from among the people, Deut. xviii. 19. viz. from an inheritance with the saints, in the kingdom of God and his Christ, Acts iii. 23.

I have carefully transcribed the sermon verbatim, and made some observations on it afterward, I think on every verse a little, as I found openness to it on my mind; and 'tis recommended to the serious perusal and consideration of all those who tenderly and unfeignedly love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

T. C.

Some

Some observations on Christ's sermon on the mount.

Matthew v. 1, 2.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, &c.

Our Lord seeing the multitudes, for the advancing his Father's glory, his own kingdom, and the good of souls, went up into the mountain, and sat in the power of the Father; and when so set down, his disciples came unto him: which shews the necessity of coming to Christ, to hear his word, and that christians ought to assemble themselves before him, that he may speak to them either immediately; or if he pleases to enlarge the heart of any of his ministers to declare his word; and as his disciples then personally came unto him, *Matt. xviii. 20.* so now we ought to come to him in spirit; and then when but two or three are so come to him, he is as really present spiritually, as he was personally in the mount. And as this meeting in the mount was powerful and glorious, so will all those be, in measure, where Jesus is really present in spirit. *And he opened his mouth, and taught them.* Thus when true believers meet before Christ, he teaches them, and opens the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and speaks truly to the state of the people, even now spiritually, as he did then vocally: and his word is with power and great glory. Oh may all his servants and ministers, who are sensible of his divine call, minister according to their several gifts and capacities, in his power, and by his holy and divine authority: this must reform the world, and change the hearts of poor mortals, and forward the work of reformation, which (with godly sorrow it may be truly said) goes but too slowly on in the world. Christ being thus set in the power of the Father, opened his mouth, and let fall a shower of blessings on those

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those whose hearts were prepared to receive them ; for his great love and tender compassion is generally manifested to poor souls, when they with love and zeal to him, and for the honour of his great name, meet and assemble before him. He begins and says,

Verse 3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

It is a safe and blessed state to be truly and spiritually poor, and to be rightly sensible of it before the Most High ; for then we are nothing, nor have any thing but from the Lord, and without him man feels himself undone, his soul must starve, he must go naked, if the Almighty do not feed him, and cloath him ; and when he or she sees themselves poor and wretched, miserable, blind and naked, without Christ, notwithstanding all the fine things they may enjoy in this world, which is of a fading nature ; oh ! then how the soul cries, how it begs for mercy and grace ; a dry form of words will not satisfy it then ; but it begs with tears, Lord, help me, or I perish ! save me, or I am undone for ever ! here the soul humbly approaches the throne of grace by prayer ; and if an answer is not quickly received (for such a soul is apt to think the time long) it waits patiently with that servant of God, who said, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. For I know there is no help for me but from thee, oh ! my God, and my Saviour ! saith the truly poor soul ; the food which must keep life in me, is thy word ; and the raiment which I want is thy righteousness, as thou wrought it for me, and works it in me also. The Lord looks with a compassionate eye on such souls, and doth not choose to turn them away empty ; but as they abide in the patience, waiting for his appearance in hope, he assures them of the kingdom ; and a great turn and change is witnessed ; for the blessing of Christ makes them rich, which adds no sorrow with it, *Prov. x. 22. for the greatest sorrow*
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was, and is, for want of it; now their treasure and heart is in heaven, and heavenly things are their chiefest delight; now they are cloathed with Christ's righteousness, he hath put it upon them, and they shew it in the sight of men, a thorough change being wrought both within and without also; *The holy Spirit bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God, Rom. viii. 16. and Christ says, Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Verse 4. *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

The mourning here spoken of, is that of a godly sort, which may sometimes appear outwardly: 1st, For the soul may mourn for its own sins and iniquities; 2^{dly}, For want of a Saviour; and, 3^{dly}, For the iniquities of others. For, first, *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Rom. iii. 23. and since we have all sinned, we have all need to mourn before the Lord, and bow ourselves before the Most High; and when he sees that we are humbled before him, he then will comfort us: Christ will send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth in his name, who will come unto us; and when he is come, we may plainly know and understand it is he, by what he doth, according to Christ's own rule, which is infallible and certain; says he, When he is come, he will reprove (or convince) the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my father, and ye see me no more; and of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged, John xvi. 8, 9, 10, &c.* Thus according to Christ, that which shews us our sin, and convinces us of it, is the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter; that, after we have mourned for our sins, which he convinces us of, then he comforts us with inward comfort and consolation. 2^{dly}, This Comforter also convinceth us of our formal righteousness, when it is only formal, without the power of Christ; and then the

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the soul mourns after the life and power of godliness, which indeed is great gain with true contentment, 1 Tim. iv. 8. vi. 6. and hath the promise of the things of this life, and that also which is to come. And so here we are comforted by the spirit in the promise, in which we have faith to believe in Christ, and that he will verily do as he hath promised. 3dly, It also convinceth us of judgment, when we judge with wrong judgment; and when we mourn for our mistake, he makes us sensible of this righteous judgment, which judges the prince of this world, who is judged by Christ; and then instead of mourning, we are ready to sing with the saints of old, *Salvation and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments, for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath revenged the blood of his servants at her hand, Rev. xix. 1, 2.*

Secondly, The soul being truly in love with Christ, and he being absent from the soul in some sense; or if he seems to stay a great while from it, although to try and prove the soul; this makes us to mourn greatly like the spouse in the *Canticles*, Cant. v. 6. who sets forth the beauty and excellent parts, and comeliness, of her beloved, and all her sorrow is, he had withdrawn himself: and well may a soul be sorrowful, when Christ spiritually withdraws himself: *The children of the bride chamber mourn in the bridegroom's absence, but rejoice in his presence, says Christ; Matt. ix. 15. who is the very perfection of beauty and holiness. But the soul abiding in his love, and seeking of him, and waiting for him, in his own due time he will certainly come to that soul; for he is the truth who said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

3dly, Again pious souls cannot but mourn for the sins and abominations of the times, Heb. vi. 6. Rev. xi. 8. which is a great exercise to them, and

affects them with sorrow and mourning; but they are comforted with blessed promises, which the Holy Ghost, at times and seasons, immediately applies to their souls, as recorded in the holy scripture. And let it be remembred, that all our good times and seasons are in the hand of the Lord. It is recorded in the holy scripture, that God would have his people spoken comfortably to; *Isa. xl. 1.* And that he would give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified, *Isa. lxi. 3.*

Verse 5. *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

Be not high-minded, saith one of his servants; *Rom. xi. 20.* and another saith, *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, James iv. 6.* Again, *The meek will he teach his way, and the meek will he guide in judgment,* as the holy scripture witnesseth, *Psal. xxv. 9.* So that well said our holy Saviour, that the meek should be blessed; grace is given to them, and God is their teacher, and their guide in judgment; a most blessed gift, teacher and guide: a great blessing indeed, to receive grace from almighty God, to be taught his ways by him, and to have the holy One to be our guide in judgment. And he who has all power in heaven, and in earth, committed into his hand, says as above, *That the meek shall inherit the earth:* they have the rightest and truest enjoyment of all the things of this life; whereas the proud and scornful are a burthen to themselves and others, and hardly any thing pleases them, or any thing good enough for them; when, on the other hand, the meek and contented mind hath (according to a good general maxim) a continual feast.

Verse 6. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

Let it be remembered, that our mortal bodies cannot enjoy health long, without a natural appetite to meat and drink, so our souls cannot live unto holiness, without spiritual hunger, and an inward thirst after the righteousness which Christ puts upon his saints; not by imputation only, but actually also: such souls he will find as holy *Mary* witnessed, and bare her testimony to the truth thereof, viz. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away*, Luke i. 53. When we are emptied of sin and self, then there is room for the Almighty to pour into us of his spirit (if we would fill any thing it must be empty) so must we be empty, if we hunger and thirst after righteousness; truly, then shall we pray our heavenly Father for divine food, and it will be our meat and drink to do his will; and we shall delight to feed upon his word, as Christ says, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, Mat. iv. 4. This is holy food for the soul, which nourishes, and keeps it alive to God, and without which it is dead, notwithstanding it may have the form and fashion of a living body. And as this hunger and thirst, or desire, must be spiritual, so must the food be also, *It being the spirit that quickens*, John vi. 63, and gives life to the soul; wherefore let a spiritual hunger and thirst be in the soul after God, and his righteousness. A righteous soul being greatly athirst after the Lord, cries out; *As the hart panteth after the water brook, so doth my soul after thee living God*, Psal. xlii. 1. And this holy thirst was greatly satisfied, so that his heart was many times sweetly opened to praise the Lord. 'Tis true, we have an adversary, that would be filling us with many things, fleshly, worldly, and satanical; but we are to shut up our hearts against him, and to keep out all those things, and to stand open to Christ, and empty before him, and if we find this our ad-

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versary too hard for us, we are to fly, and cry to the Lord for succour and help, who is a God not only afar off, but also near at hand, and a present help in the needful time, as many of his servants and children have experienced and witnessed him. wherefore, to be truly hungry and thirsty after Christ and his righteousness, intitles us to his gracious promise, who says, *they shall be filled,*

Verse 7. *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

It is highly necessary for mortals to shew mercy, in all their words and actions one to another; and also to the creatures, which God hath made for the use of man; 'tis usually said, that a merciful man is merciful to his beast, which generally is true; and if men are merciful to their beasts, how much more ought they to be merciful one to another. Where mercy is to be extended it ought not to be done sparingly, since thereby (according to Christ's blessed doctrine) we are to obtain mercy. That servant that shewed no mercy to his fellow, had no mercy shewed unto him from his Lord, *Matt. xviii. 32, 33, 34.* It is also recorded, in the name of the Lord, *He hath shewn unto thee, O man, what is good, that thou shouldest do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God, Micah vi. 8.* by which it appears, that we are not just in the sight of God, if we are cruel and unmerciful one to another: and we ought not only to be merciful, but to love it; which, if we are truly humble, we shall certainly do; mercy will lessen, and not magnify, weakness, failings, or small trivial things one in another: and sometimes as the case may require, some larger things; and yet there is room for seasonable reproof and correction: but mercy must be mixed with justice, else the correction may end in tyranny. We ought to be gentle to all men, which is a true token

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token of true gentility : so to be truly merciful, is to be blessed, and to obtain mercy.

Verse 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.*

By which we may understand, that we are to take care of our hearts, and to keep a strict watch over them ; and not admit unclean or unchaste thoughts or sinful desires to have an entrance therein. And if at unawares they should at any time enter, we must not entertain nor love them, but turn them out ; for we, in this, should be like our heavenly Father, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with any allowance or approbation. *Habak. i. 13.* otherwise it will hinder us from seeing God, and from the sweet enjoyment of his most precious presence, and beholding the Only Begotten of the Father, and the fullness of his grace and truth, which we cannot see if our hearts are impure : an instance of which, we have in the Scribes and Pharisees, tho' they were outwardly righteous and clean, yet within were very impure, so that they could not see God, tho' he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, *Mat. xxiii. 25. &c.* Notwithstanding their nice discerning eyes, yet they could not see him, for the impurity of their hearts : which was so great, that they murdered the just One, their hearts being full of deceit and hypocrisy. *Make clean the inside, that the outside may be clean also,* says Christ, *Mat. xxiii. 26.* from whence it appears, that a true christian must be clean, both within and without also. The true beginning of the work of purity and sanctity, must be first within ; and being innocent and pure in heart, we shall then see the glory of the Father, the lovely beauty of the Son, and the power of the holy Ghost, or Spirit.

Verse 9. *Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

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This peace-making is excellent work, and blessed calling; what pity it is, that there is not more such workmen in the world, who would set themselves heartily to it, which if they did, in a right spirit, God would certainly prosper the work in their hands, and plentifully reward them with his own peace, which passeth the common understanding of the natural man. If our ingenious men, our men and women of skill and good natural parts, would take a little pains, nay, when the case requires it, a great deal, the Almighty would richly reward them. This work is not too mean even for princes, and nobles; no, not even the greatest monarchs on earth, without it be too mean for them to be called the children of God. And if the children of God are peace makers, what, and whose children are they, who break the peace of nations, communities, and families? Wherefore we should seek peace with all men, and ensue it, 1. Pet. iii. 11. or sue for it, by our continual seeking of it, being a precious jewel, when found; and tho' this office may seem a little unthankful in the beginning, or at first, yet in the end it brings forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, as many so labouring have witnessed. And Christ, to encourage the work, says, *They shall be called the children of God*; which are words of the King of kings; and if the princes of this world would promote this work among themselves, it would save them a vast expence of treasure, and of blood; and as these peace-makers are to be called the children of God, they who are truly concerned herein, are not only so called, but are so indeed, and in truth.

Verse 10. *Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Persecution may be considered in relation to calumny and reproach, and in imprisonments, confinements, or the like, or taking away life or goods on a religious account, for conscientious scruples, &c.

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What sad work hath there been on this account in the world, not among *Turks* and *Jews* only, but amongst professors of Christ and christianity, which is indeed a great reproach to that holy name. Persecution for righteousness-sake, is not fit for *Turks* or *Jews*, much less for the professors of our meek Lord; his dispensation and gospel being absolutely the reverse to it, which is a shameful sin to all men, in all nations: but however, the persecuted have this comfort in the midst of all their sufferings, they are blessed of Christ their Lord; who himself suffered for them, and are promised by him the kingdom of heaven. By which doctrine it may be safely concluded, that the members of his true church never persecuted any, though they have been often persecuted by many, as the large and voluminous books and tracts (of persecuting for religion) now extant, do plainly make appear; by which the eyes of many are open to see the ugliness of it; and a spirit of moderation begins now to grow and spring a little in the earth, in divers parts thereof.

It were to be desired, that all christians moderation might more and more encrease, and might appear unto all men; because God is at hand, who will justify the innocent (whom he knows better than any man, because he sees their hearts) and he will condemn none but the guilty. How shall the *Jews* be converted, or the *Turks* convinced to, and of the verity of the christian religion, while its professors are tearing and rending one another to pieces? Had it not been for the immoderation and persecution among professors of Christ in *Christendom*, so called, it is probable christianity would have made a far greater progress in all the four quarters of the world long before this time, than it hath now done. Persecution hath been proposed by the immoderate, to lay heats and divisions, and cure breaches; but the antient history of persecution, and the modern practice of

it, fully convince us, that it hath always tended to make the hot hotter, the divisions greater, and the breach wider, and so the contention grow endless; which nothing will end, but a calm and quiet temper of mind, the mind being cooled by the gentle influences of the holy spirit of Christ, the immaculate Lamb; who came not to destroy, nor devour, but to seek and to save that which was lost, and gone astray, that he might bring them home to his fold of rest, in his Father's kingdom.

Verse 11. *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.*

Verse 12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets, which were before you.*

There is a persecution as before hinted, by calumny, and reproach, or reviling, by evil-speaking, and falsities, which, for the most part, it is better patiently and quietly to suffer, for Christ's sake; and if we are abused, to appeal to him, for many times words beget words, till at last it comes to prejudice, and breaks the unity and peace of brethren, and families; so that in a general way, one had better suffer the calumnies and reproaches of evil men, with a tender concern for God's glory, resting in the blessing of Christ; and that thou wilt most surely feel, if thou canst appeal to him on this wise, *Lord, thou knowest I suffer this wrong for thy sake.* In such sufferings there is an inward joy, a spiritual rejoicing; and the heart of the persecuted is abundantly more glad, through the blessing and goodness of Christ, than the persecutor's, whose conscience accuseth him in secret. And as to personal persecution, it is no more than the prophets, and our Lord, did suffer before us. And with that consideration Christ comforts his suffering seed: *And those who suffer with him, and his seed, these have the promise of reigning with him.*

Mat. ii. 12. and himself hath promised them a reward, no less than the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 13. *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Here Christ sheweth that his followers must season the earth, by living a savory life, and by walking according to his doctrine, whose doctrine is wonderfully set forth in this excellent sermon; and if we live up to those holy rules, we shall then be serviceable in our generation, and our lives will teach the people as well as our words, and sometimes better too, by how much example is better than precept; and indeed christians ought to be careful in both; in life to live holily, and in words to be sparing, observing to *Let your words be few and savory, and seasoned with grace, that they may administer grace to the hearers*, Eccl. v. 2. Eph. iv. 29, Col. iv. 6. Thus should we season the world, and salt it with the salt of the covenant; but if we lose this savour of grace, and take a liberty which Christ and his church do not allow of, of speaking at random things which are not convenient, nor edifying, but altogether unsavory; then according to our master, which is in heaven, we are good for nothing, and to be cast out (*i. e.* out of the church) and then we shall be trampled upon by men, as in truth we deserve: not that our bodies are to be killed, or destroyed; for the door of the church is always open to receive true penitents. But for this end and good purpose we are chastened of the Lord, that the soul may be saved the day of the Lord, 1 Cor. xi. 32. And those who know godly sorrow for their sins, and turning from the evil of their ways, by amendment of life, whose Christ forgives, and adviseth his church to do the same, saying, *If he repent forgive him*, Luke xvii. 3. which repentance, is best manifested by a new life, a holy and blameless conversation; for words,

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without works, are good for nothing, but to be trodden under foot of men.

Verse 14. *Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

True and faithful christians are indeed as stars in God's firmament, which are of excellent use to people in the night season, and more especially when they are not clouded, and in a particular manner to those who travel on the seas, for when they have not seen the sun for a season, then they are good guides to the sea-faring man; and likewise in the wilderness, on the land; and this world is like a wilderness, and like the troubled sea, to some poor souls; and then good men, and good women, are serviceable, to reprove and instruct in righteousness: *Such (says Daniel the prophet) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. xii.*

3. And these are like a city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid.

Verse 15. *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel; but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house.*

Mortal men, when divinely enlight'ned by the grace and spirit of Christ, ought to exert themselves to their Master's glory, and excite others, to stir them up to their duty; and to endeavour, as much as in them lies, to promote the kingdom and interest of their dear Lord; for men are God's candles, as the scripture saith, *The spirit of man, is the candle of the Lord, Prov. xx. 27. and xxiv. 20. Job. xli. 17.* and this candle is often lighted by Christ, who *lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John i. 9* and is the true light of the great Father of light. The great and good end of Christ's lighting man's spirit, and illuminating him with divine light, is that he may shine out to others, in a good conversation, and a holy life, which is both serviceable to others, and himself also; and answers the end of his

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who enlight'ned him by the fire of his word, or with a coal from his holy altar; being thus lighted, and walking in it (*as the nations of them that are saved, shall walk in the light of the Lamb* Rev. xxi. 23, 24.) Here all the house or society, is truly lighted by such lights; and those who have received greater gifts, or degrees of divine light from Christ, than some others, and may have a larger share of natural or acquired parts, ought not to *hide it* (as our Lord phrases it) *under a bushel, but put it* (in its proper place, or) *on a candlestick*; and as the candle is of little use when 'tis put out, therefore we ought to be very careful to keep to watchfulness and prayer, that it be kept lighted in time of darkness; for *the candle of the wicked is often put out.*

Verse 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Since there is a bright and shining nature and quality in the holy lives of Christ's servants, and in the conversation of his faithful followers, therefore it should and ought to be manifest, and to appear before men; our lamp should be burning, and our light shining, *Matt. xxv. 8.* and we should take care to get and keep holy oil in our vessels, that therewith our lamps may be supplied, otherwise folly instead of wisdom will appear in our conversations, which will be a hindrance (when our great Bridegroom cometh) to our entrance into life, or God's kingdom, and greatly hindereth our Master's glory, which by all means we are to endeavour the furtherance of; and men generally take more notice of our evil works, and where an evil eye is open, will sooner see them, than our good ones; so that we have need to be very careful, and keep a holy watch in our conversations, that our light may so shine, as that our Father which is in heaven may be glorified, in our bringing forth much good fruit.

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Verse 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

Verse 18. *For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

The excellency of the dispensation of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ is really wonderful! having no manner of tendency toward destroying the law of God given by *Moses*; for Christ's doctrine comes up through it, fulfils it, and goes beyond it, in perfection, and in the beauty of holiness, and in the life and power of pure religion.

The law, saith the apostle, is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ Gal. iii. 24, 25. and no man can come truly to Christ, nor be in him, or be a new creature, without coming through the law, and keeping the commandments: but these commandments are to be distinguished from the superstitious traditions, and ceremonious customs, of the *Jews*. The Scribes and Pharisees (who though they sat in *Moses'* seat) did not do as *Moses* did; but crucified him whom *Moses* prophesied of, saying, *The Lord your God shall raise up a prophet from among your brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken, Deut. xviii. 15.* Christ and his disciples teach the law, though not the traditions of the *Jews*; who were very careful of their small tithes, of their own interest, though but of, or in small things, neglecting the weighty matters of the law, which is in no wise to be passed by, but to be fulfilled while heaven and earth endure.

Now the law and commandments which our Lord spoke of, are generally understood to be those ten commandments recorded in the xxth chap. of *Exodus*, with other absolute commands written by *Moses* (distinguished from the *Jews* traditions) and such as were general to mankind: for Christ is the general Saviour, both to the *Jew*, and also to the *Gentile*, who believe in, and obey him: and that those command-

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ments may the more be minded, and taken notice of and imprinted in peoples thoughts, they are here, in part, transcribed out of the xxth chap. of Exodus.

I. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor his wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass; nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

All which our holy Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled in his own person, and taught it to the people, as this his most holy sermon will witness abundantly: and all who profess his great name, must and ought to teach the same.

Verse 19. *Whoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Here we are strictly enjoined, as we value our reputation in heaven, both to do, and to teach, the commandments, and law of Moses: though not the

ordinances, commandments, or traditions, of the Scribes. Now the Scribes and Pharisees taught divers good things in words, as we understand by Christ, *But (says he) he ye not like unto them; for they say, and do not: example being often of more force and power than precept: they might have said as some of our modern Scribes do, to the people, "You must not do as we do; but do as we say:" but, according to Christ, this will not serve their turn; for he shuts the gates of heaven against all them (and all such) though his own hearers, as in the next verse,*

Verse 20. For I say unto you, except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Those Scribes and Pharisees had a righteousness, but it was one of their own making, an outside one only; whereas within they were full of deceit and hypocrisy; they cryed up righteousness in words and yet cryed out against him who taught it in the greatest purity, and sought his destruction; they were notable examples to all persecutors for religion. Our Lord and his servants, did not, nor do not, speak against outside holiness, so as the inside be the same; for a living man hath both inside and out; so has living righteousness an inward and outward purity, which is manifest by its fruits; and those fruits are fruits of the spirit, which is, "love, meekness, temperance, patience, experience, hope, and charity, or brotherly love, Gal. v. 22, 23." of which those people shewed very little to Christ; he was very sensible of their envy and malice, which was very contrary fruits to holiness; and therefore he tells them that hear him, That their *Righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, or they in no case shall enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Verse 21. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment.

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Verse 22. *But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

Here we may learn that the law provided nothing against anger, only in this case, against shedding of blood; and many times if anger is too much kindled, it sets the soul on fire of hell, if it be not timely quenched. People, as it grows hotter, call one another out of their names, and take the name of the Lord in vain, break the third commandment, swearing by him, and cursing of men: we may plainly see by Christ's doctrine, that the first degree of anger (without a cause) is dangerous; but the second is very dangerous. Soft words from a sedate mind will wonderfully help in this case: it is not easily conceived what a mighty advantage Satan hath upon one that is angry without a cause: and we are often apt to think we have cause when we have none at all; and then we make work for repentance, without which we are in danger of hell-fire. Wherefore every true christian ought to watch against the evil of anger, and yet there may be anger (where there is a real cause) without sin, *Eph. iv. 26.*

Verse 23. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee,*

Verse 24. *Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

The christian religion admits of no malice nor guile; the worship of it is in spirit and truth, and love, without hypocrisy, without deceit, or hatred: if we come to the altar, this will hinder our acceptance. Though we may indeed have a gift, we are to seek reconciliation, and not say, Let him come to me, I will not go to him; but Christ tells us,

we must go to him ; and if thou go'st to the offended, in a meek and christian spirit, and seek reconciliation, if thy brother will not be reconciled, if the fault be in him, thou hast done thy duty, and thy gift will be received, and Christ will manifest himself to thee by his grace and spirit. But yet art thou to seek for peace, he having ordained it, and laid it as a duty incumbent on thee.

Verse 25. *Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him: lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.*

Verse 26. *Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

It is plain from hence, that Jesus for a quick and speedy end of differences ; says he, *Agree with him quickly* ; for it is of dangerous consequence to let disagreements lay long, it eats like a canker, and it destroys the very nature of religion. Personal differences is a great hurt to families, to churches, and to nations and countries, especially when espoused by parties ; then what rending, tearing, and devouring work it makes : wherefore take Christ's counsel, and agree quickly ; and if the difference be on the account of debt, as is often likely, if the debt be just, 'tis better to offer up one's self, and all that one has in the world, than to stand our with one's adversary, till it come to the utmost extremity ; and for christians to go to law one with another, is contrary to the apostle's advice, 1 Cor. vi. 1. and oftentimes the gainer of the cause, loses by going to law ; so that 'tis good to agree quickly ; it being profitable so to do, both spiritually and naturally.

Verse 27. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery :*

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Verse 28. *But I say unto you, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

The law was against adultery; but the gospel is against lust; and where there is no lust, there can be no adultery; for then the occasion of adultery is taken away; and the cause being taken away, the effect of course ceaseth. Behold the chaste and pure doctrine of Christ, and his holy dispensation, greatly excelling the law, or *Mosaic* dispensation! our blessed Saviour doth not admit of an unchaste or lustful looking upon women; much less of immodest salutations, touches, embraces or discourses, which all tend to beget lust in the hearts of men; and lust conceived, brings forth sin; and sin when finished, brings forth death to the soul, *James* i. 15.

Verse 29. *And if thy right-eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

Verse 30. *And if thy right-hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

Christ compares the sinful lusts and inclinations, which are the cause of mens destruction, and their being cast into hell, to a right-eye, or a right hand (two of the most useful and serviceable members of the body) not that he intended that we should cut off our natural members, but that we should cut off these sinful lusts, and cast them from us, though they were as a right-eye, or hand. Now, observe, it is very much against nature, and very painful to pull out an eye, or to cut off an hand; so sin of many kinds, is very agreeable to nature, or the natural man, and 'tis very hard for him to part with it; he pleads the use of it, and when Christ the physician of the soul, comes to put his incision knife to it (which is his word)

poor man is too apt to fly from it, and to shrink from under its holy stroke: the holy baptist, *John*, understanding our Lord's doctrine, and being sensible of the powerful working of Christ's word and spirit, says, *Now is the ax laid to the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire*, *Matt. iii. 10.* which fire is nothing less than hell, which without repentance, and amendment of life will be our portion.

Verse 31. *It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.*

Verse 32. *But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.*

The great husband of souls here plainly sheweth, that husbands should be tender of their wives; and his apostle says, *Be not bitter against them*, *Col. iii. 19.* Men and their wives ought to live together in love, and be good examples to their children and servants; and not part one from the other, except for the cause of fornication; and that should be proved; for some men are only jealous of their wives, and some without a cause, and where there is cause (as a man may think) it ought to be clearly proved before they part from one another; a man ought to be tender of his wife, as of his own body; "For they two are one flesh." Men and their wives are often too apt to magnify one another's faults, and to put the worst constructions upon each other's words and actions, when they differ, which widens breaches instead of healing them: whereas love, and true charity, and putting the best, and not the worst construction on things, would chase away wrath, strife, and hatred; and though *Moses* gave the *Jews* that permission of divorcement, for the hardness of their Hearts; yet christians ought to live so, that there should be no need of it amongst them. And if christians

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christians do part upon the account of fornication (for they are not permitted to part on any other account by Christ, as above) they are to marry no more, while each other live ; for if they do, they are pronounced by Christ, to be adulterers and adulteresses. *Luke, xvi. 18.*

Verse 33. *Again ye have heard, that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.*

Verse 34. *But I say unto you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne :*

Verse 35. *Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool : neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king.*

Verse 36. *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.*

Verse 37. *But let your communication be yea, yea ; nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.*

It was allowed to the Jews to vow to the Lord, and swear by his name, provided they performed their vows and oaths. But here our Lord prohibits and disallows, or abolishes, all swearing, with an *I say unto you swear not at all.* Tho' our swearing christians will have it, that he here prohibits only vain swearing, or common swearing, which cannot be, because the oaths he here speaks of were solemn and to the Lord. And the apostle James tells us, *We must not swear by any oath, James v. 12.* Neither did the primitive christians swear at all ; and christians ought to be so just in their conversations, as that their solemn words or promises would give them credit, without any need of oaths. If occasion or need be thou hast liberty to add yea to thy yea, and nay to thy nay, or solemn words equivalent to it ; and if more be evil, it must also be evil to require more, and that it is evil if it be more (as all vows and oaths are) we have Christ for our author, a good foundation to build upon.

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Verse 38. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.*

Verse 39. *But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

Verse 40. *And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.*

There was room and liberty, by the law of *Moses* for a man to revenge himself, if he had an injury done to him; but *Christ* teaches patient suffering; we are not to give any offence, but we are to take them quietly for his sake, in which *Jesus* was an excellent example to us, whose sufferings was not for himself, but for us; he turned his cheek to the smiter, and his face to those that plucked off the hair, *Isa.* 1. 6. but to a man of courage and choler, this indeed is no small cross; but he must deny himself, and take up *Christ's* cross daily, and follow him, if he will be his disciple, *Mat.* x, 38. chap. xvi. 24. And as for the law, it is better never to meddle with it, in a general way; and if thy coat by law is taken away, thou had better give him thy cloak, than stand out another trial with him: and it is much if thou art not a gainer by so doing. But the gain is not urged as the best motive: but obedience to *Christ*, our great Lord, and good master; who said, *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Verse 41. *And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.*

It can hardly be supposed that any would take the pains to force or violently compel a man to go a mile with him, unless upon some extraordinary occasion: but many times through over-perswasion, or much invitation, one may be in that sense compelled to do that which one is not inclined to, and in such case, we are to be liberal in answering the love and goodwill of our friend, so compelling of us: for love begets love, and cannot easily be withstood, as in the parable.

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parable of the wedding, or marriage-supper; they were to be compelled to come to it, *Luke xiv. 23.* we are not to understand by outward constraint, or cruelty, but by the force and power of love; divine love has a great power, and is of a compelling nature, according to this distinction and consideration; and then we should be unkind, and ungrateful, if we did not answer with suitable returns.

Verle 42. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away.

We are here to suppose the asker to be in real want and necessity, and the borrower also to stand in need, and the asked to be in a capacity, and of ability to supply and assist the asker, and borrower; and then in such case we are by no means to refuse to give to him that asketh, nor to turn away from him that would borrow of us, and if we are not in a capacity to supply, then to use mild and friendly expressions; for christians should be courteous and kind to all, and particularly to the distressed. And if we think that the askers or borrowers are not worthy or deserving for their own sakes, we should, if need be, give and lend for Christ's sake, and in obedience to him, though it cross our own inclinations.

Verse 43. Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

Verse 44. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

Verse 45. That ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise upon the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust.

The *Hebrews* had liberty to hate their enemies, but we have not understood that ever any people, by any dispensation, had any liberty to hate their neighbours or friends: so that those that are in that state, are far beyond the line of truth. But, says our holy

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Law-giver, *I say unto you, love your enemies.* If we love our enemies, we can in no wise destroy them, although it were in our power. Again, *Bless them that curse you.* But alas! how apt are men (and even those who would think it hard to be told they are disobedient to Christ) to render railing for railing, and cursing for cursing, instead of blessing (*do good to them that hate you*) if we are sensible of any body that hates us, and have real demonstration of it (for sometimes we imagine it, when it is not so) yet are we to do them all the good turns we can. (*And pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you*) Thus we are not to render evil for evil, but to overcome the evil with that which is good. Sweet was our Lord's example to us in this, when he said, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,* Luke xxiii. 34. If spiteful persecutors did really know what they do, when they persecute the just, their damnation must needs be very great; but if we do good for evil, as Christ hath taught, then are we the children of our heavenly Father, *who maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

Verse 46. *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

Verse 47. *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so?*

Our virtue is much more shining in loving those who do not love us, than in loving those that do; and it is natural for us to love them that love us, and we should be ungrateful if we did not: but the reward is greater, if we love them that do not love us, which must be manifested in deeds, as well as words: for saying and doing, sometimes are two things, which made the apostle say, *Our love must not be with words and with tongue only, but in deed and in truth,* 1 John iii. 18. Also publicans (men by the Jews ranked with

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And as to friendly and hearty salutations, that may be necessary or needful, we should not only manifest them to our brethren, but as occasion requires to all; it being a shining virtue in christians to be kind to strangers, and to shew forth a generous and loving temper and deportment to such as may not be of us; though not by a flattering, modish, or complimentary way, yet hearty and respectful, according to the plainness of Christ, and the simplicity of his gospel, without respect of persons, respect being generally, or too generally, shown to high, more than to them of low degree. As we are not to refuse our friendly salutations to the great, or the rich, so we are not to neglect the poor, for the publicans do so.

Verse 48. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is heaven is perfect.

Christ would have us to be perfect in the practice of his doctrine, and to live up to it in perfect obedience, according to the best of our judgments, and understandings, and not do his work by halves; but honestly, and perfectly, according to the measure of grace received, some having received twice, some thrice so much as some others; as the parable of the talents plainly sheweth: so that what discoveries or manifestations of grace, light, or truth; we have received, we ought to walk up to them perfectly; *Even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* As the Almighty is perfect in his love, justice, mercy, grace and truth, unto poor mortals in Christ Jesus, his only begotten, and in all his works; so ought we to be perfect in our known duty: as it is written, *Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God am holy, Levit. ii. 19.* So must we be according to our degree of grace received.

'Tis supposed, no body will imagine that any mortal can come up in degree with the Almighty, but according to our measure, or gift, and degree of grace received, we are to be holy and perfect, as God, our heavenly Father, and Christ, our dear Lord, is so in fulness.

Chap. 6. Verse 1. *Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them : otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*

Verse 2. *Therefore when thou dost thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men : verily I say unto you, they have their reward.*

Verse 3. *But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth :*

Verse 4. *That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.*

The christian religion, in its purity, according to the doctrine of the founder of it, is a compassionate religion, and full of pity, as well as piety ; it is a holy composition of charity, and goodness. The apostle thus describes it : the pure religion, and that which is undefiled before God and the Father, is this, *To visit the fatherless, and widows, in their afflictions ; and to keep himself unspotted from the world,* Jam. i. 27. This is pure religion, and this is the christian religion ; happy are these who walk up to it, and live according to the precepts of him who dictated them ; then the widows and the fatherless, would not be neglected ; the poor would be very generously taken care of, and our garments kept clean, and all done as secretly as may be ; for when we proclaim our alms-deeds, and charity, we lose our reward from our heavenly Father ; also when alms is given it ought to be done in the spirit of love, and meekness, and so received ; else the receiver loses a few

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good benefit, and the giver his heavenly reward. To give to the poor, is to lend to him that made us, and we shall have good and greater measure returned us again, *Prov. xix. 17.* If we hope to have the gates of Christ's kingdom opened to us at last, our hearts must also be opened to the poor and needy, when in distress; remembering the words of Christ, where he says to some who were waiting for, and wanting an entrance into the kingdom, saying, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*; he tells them, *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was naked, and ye clothed me not; I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.* They answered, *Lord when saw we thee hungry, naked, sick, or in prison, and did not feed thee, cloath thee, and visit thee?* He answers, *In as much as ye did it not to one of these which believe in my name, ye did it not unto me,* *Matt. xxv. 42.* He sympathiseth with his poorest and meanest members, whatever others do, and takes that done to them, as done to himself, whether it be good or bad. We should be good to all, but especially to Christ's members, or the household of the faithful keepers of his commandments; and alms-deeds have the approbation of goodness from the universal testimony of all men, in a general way. Our alms being thus distributed according to our ability, and the necessities of the object, without ostentation, and in secret, our munificent Father, who sees in secret, will openly reward us.

How many rich are there in the world, who have made great and costly entertainments for their rich friends, neighbours and relations (and if their substance be so great, that it is not felt by them) they had the more need to remember the poor: when they never so much as spare the tithe of it to them, though the poor have ten times the need of it, and though Christ says, *When thou makest a feast, invite not thy rich friends, for they will invite thee again;*

but call the poor, the lame, and the blind, &c. Luke xiv. 12.

Verse 5. *And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men; verily I say unto you they have their reward.*

Verse 6. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.*

Verse 7. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the Heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking.*

Verse 8. *Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before you ask him.*

Prayer is absolutely needful for the being and well-being of an inward reform'd christian; an outside formal christian may use the form, tho' unreformed; but it availeth but little without reformation. And private prayer, according to Christ's rule, is effectual, and rewardable, agreeable to his doctrine. He also speaks against hypocrisy, and loving to be seen of men, with a command not to be like unto them. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet.* When we feel, and are sensible of a divine call, this must of course be the right and best time (for Christ has not set us a distinct hour) then we are to enter into the closet of an humble heart or mind, or some secret place in private. This is Christ's order for particular persons in a general way; but is not intended to prevent such who are rightly concerned to pray in the public assemblies, or gathering of the church; for we have Christ for our example, who prayed openly and publicly with his disciples.

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speaking. Formal repetitions of prayer, repeated day by day, when they are not according (but contrary) to the states of those to whom they are read or repeated, must needs be vain, and people may vainly make use of the Lord's own form in that case (though it is the best in the world) and to think to be heard for their much speaking, is to run into the error of the heathen. *Be not ye (says Christ) therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.* Prayer is a gift from God, and from Christ, and as we wait on God in Christ's name and power, he will give us that gift, when he sees we stand in need of it, or it will be for our edification: for he has promised to pour out the spirit of prayer, and of supplication, upon his people. And our great apostle said, *if he prayed, he would pray with the Spirit,* 1 Cor. xiv. 15. In another place he says, *We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered,* Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the same apostle says, *The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.* Those had not found out the way of reading prayers unto the people in common, neither of making of them; though it will be acknowledged that they had much more of the mind of Christ, than any of our modern prayer-makers or sayers; and since there is no form like that of Christ's, it is here set down, that people might take diligent care to learn it, and to teach it to their children. But if they learn it rightly, they must also learn to live in it: that is, live according to it; otherwise they will mock, instead of serving him, that made both it and them for his own honour, and the glory of his name.

Verse 9. *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.*

Verse 10. *Thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

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Verse 11. Give us this day our daily bread.

Verse 12. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Verse 13. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Verse 14. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Verse 15. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

A short form, and but few words, but of excellent composition. And truly happy are those, who live so in their conversation, that they may when they use them, do it without falsehood, or deceit; enjoying the answer of peace in the practice of them, and the sense of grace influencing the soul.

1st, *Our Father which art in heaven.* The great Creator is indeed our universal Father, hath made us all, and all nations, of one blood; but there is another, a nearer relation than this, to be a child of God by regeneration; for otherwise, if we live in an unregenerate state, in our natural sins and lusts, all which are of satan, then Christ says, *Ye are of your father the devil; and the lusts of your father ye will do,* John viii. 44. a strong reason: but in another place, *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother,* Matt. xii. 40, 50. It is into this relation that the soul ought to come, that can truly and religiously say, *Our Father, &c.*

2dly, *Hallowed be thy name.* Do we sanctify the holy name of the God of the whole earth? Do we religiously observe to fear and serve him? Do we prophane his awful name, by taking it in vain, and living in sin and vanity? Which instead of hallowing and sanctifying his name, is to dishonour and reproach it on our part, though he will hallow and honour his own name in justice and judgment, on pro-

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prophane and ungodly livers, at the last day, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead by Jesus Christ; God will not be mocked; such as every one sows, such shall they reap, whether sin unto death, or righteousness unto life, *Gal. vi. 7.*

3dly, *Thy kingdom come.* His kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness. Happy souls! who seek the righteousness of it betimes, and continue in it to the end. If this kingdom comes, satan's which is a kingdom of sin and unrighteousness must needs fall.

Oh! that the rising generations might be strong to overcome the wicked one, and to be instruments to pull down his kingdom, and promote the kingdom of God, and his Christ; and if we do not believe that satan's power and kingdom may and ought to be destroyed in us, how can we pray without hypocrisy for the coming of God's holy kingdom? Believing we must live and die in sin, is a great support to satan's kingdom, and a great hindrance of the coming of the kingdom of the dear Son of God.

4thly, *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Most certainly the will of God is punctually and perfectly done in heaven; hardly any who make use of this blessed form but believes it; but this is the misery of many souls, to believe it not possible for them to do God's will here on earth, as it is done in heaven. So that such pray in unbelief, or without a true faith; and the apostle says, *What is not of faith is sin*, *Rom. xiv. 23.* Is it not also a kind of charging Christ with commanding that which cannot be done? It is worthy our sedate consideration. He hath sown grace, and ought in justice to reap it from all mortals, *Matt. xiii. 3.* The great sower, Christ sows in all sorts of men or grounds: the grace of God appears to all men, and teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and that they should live soberly, and righteously and godly, in this present world, *Titus ii. 11.* But antichrist teaches,

teaches, that it cannot be done here on earth as in heaven.

5thly, *Give us this day our daily bread.* We not being capable without his blessing of procuring our bodies or souls bread, either natural or supernatural; and because our souls cannot live without the last, no more than our bodies without the first, therefore we ought to pray to our heavenly and most holy Father for both, without doubting; and this should be done daily, either in words, holy sighing, or spiritual groans; the Almighty knowing the language of the soul in the one, as well as the other.

6thly, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* Or (as one of the evangelists hath it) *our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;* which is to the same end and purpose; for if a debtor is indebted to us, and happens, through some accident or other, to be insolvent, and hath not wherewith to pay, we are to forgive him; or else how can we expect God to forgive us? For we are all his debtors, and have nothing (that we can call our own in a religious sense) to pay that great debt, which we owe to him our mighty Creditor; who might lawfully cast us into an eternal goal. But oh! his infinite mercy and love is very great to us, poor mortals; and he would have us to imitate him, and forgive one another, as we expect he should forgive us. And since offences and trespasses will come, we must forgive, and the more freely, when the person offending sues by humble petition to the offended for it; then if we forgive not, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses.

7thly, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from all evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

That is, to lead us into truth and righteousness, which is the same with leading us out of sin, and out of temptation: for we pray to be led out of it, by pray-

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praying not to be led into it ; seeing we are not to understand that the Almighty will tempt any man to evil. If (says the apostle) *any man is tempted, let him not say he is tempted of God, for God tempteth no man; but he is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust.* James i 13. Though he doth sometimes permit and suffer us to be tempted, and when we fall into divers temptations, and escape them, we have cause to be joyful, and thankful that we are delivered out of them, and to give the glory to God, who is the great preserver of men. Whole is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Verse 16. *Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast; verily I say unto you, they have their reward.*

Verse 17. *But thou when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face.*

Verse 18. *That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.*

Christ would have all our works of piety, virtue, and charity; all our religious duties, done in the divine love, and filial fear of God, and not for vain glory or ostentation; and truly without we expect our reward from men, there is no need of an outward hypocritical shew, in such extraordinary duties, as is that of fasting, when truly called to it; and truly performed; which the *Jews* were much in practice of; and being but formal hypocrites (many of them) in it, our Lord reprehends them, and wants his own hearers to shun the like deceit; and tells them, if they *fast secretly*; their heavenly Father will reward them openly; yet we must not be open sinners; nor private ones neither; for open or public sin is damning, if not repented of, and forsaken, as well as private deceit.

Verse 19. *Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.*

Verse 20. *But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.*

Verse 21. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Earthly treasures are very apt to take up the mind, and to draw it from heaven, and because Christ would have his children to be in heaven with him, in tender love he adviseth them not to lay up for themselves riches or treasure on earth. If it be said we lay it up for our children, it may be said also, it is the same snare to them, as to the parents, and sometimes a greater, and when it is gotten, it is liable to many casualties, and creates a great deal of care and trouble; wherefore Christ tenderly adviseth to seek after, and lay up another treasure, of another nature, in another, and a safer and better place, which will not be liable to the like casualties of the former treasure and place, and urgeth us to it, with this great reason; *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* Oh! may every true christian's treasure and heart be there for ever.

Verse 22. *The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

Verse 23. *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness: if therefore the light which is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?*

It is not good to look on men nor things, with an evil eye; but singly to look on one's self and others, in the fear of God, having a single and singular eye to his glory; and then being enlightened by his divine light, we shall discern between good and evil; whereas if their be any double dealings, or looking, or thinking; or if ungodly self be in the bottom, and not the glory of God; then our light

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turned into darkness, and that darkness will be very great; as it is said in the holy scriptures, *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*, James i. 8. So that our Saviour's doctrine is good to have a single eye, and to avoid all double dealing.

Verse 24. *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, or love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

We cannot give our hearts to God, and to this world, and the things of it also, so as to set our affections on both, as saith the apostle, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 John ii. 15. And again, *The love of money is the root of all evil*, 1 Tim. vi. 10. i. e. the inordinate love of it, and seeking after it, and serving of, and for it, more than for our Maker and Saviour. Then let us despise the world, and the things of it, in comparison of our God, and our Saviour. We do not understand by those words of Christ, that he intended to debar us from seeking a comfortable accommodation for ourselves and families, in this world; but that we should not set our hearts and affections upon it; for we cannot equally affect both heaven and earth.

Verse 25. *Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on: is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

Verse 26. *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*

Christ would have us without anxious thoughts about our livings in this world, i. e. about our eating, drinking and cloathing, and tells us, that the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment; by which he shews us, that he which gave the life, will, by his providence support it; and as he hath formed the

body, he will form that which must feed it; and that we might the more depend upon God's providence, he brings us to learn, or teaches us by the fowls of the air, who neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet their great Creator feedeth them; and asks, if we are not much better than they? So that we being more noble creatures, need not doubt of the care and providence of God, and his blessing on the labour of our hands; though our hearts are not concerned unnecessarily about it, but we have freely given them to God, and to his Christ our Saviour.

Verse 27. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?*

The farmers or planters cannot by their thoughtfulness cause their corn, fruits, nor cattle, to multiply or grow; nor the tradesman his custom, goods or business (without a proper application, which our Saviour is not against) only he would have us without an incumbered and over caring mind. The merchant likewise, by all his thoughtfulness, cannot bring home his ship from far, nor carry her safe to her desired port. All things on this wise are in the hand of almighty God, and it is our duty to trust in him, and to depend upon his divine Providence, for meat, drink, and cloathing, for happiness here, and hereafter, for ever.

Verse 28. *And why take ye thought for raiment? consider the lillies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.*

Verse 29. *And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.*

Verse 30. *Wherefore if God so cloath the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more cloath you, oh! ye of little faith?*

Verse 31. *Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

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Verse 32. (*For after all these things the Gentiles seek*)
for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all
these things.

Many people now, as well as then are very fond
of their cloathing, and love to be gay and fashiona-
ble therein, and some are not a little proud of their
cloaths, and are not a little thoughtful how they may
deck themselves to be admired: when our plain
Lord who wore a vesture without a seam, sends us to
the lilly to consider her beauty and glory, and inno-
cent thoughtlesness, declaring, that *Solomon*, in all his
grandeur and splendor, was not arrayed like one of
these, *John xix. 23.* for this is a natural sweetness
and gaiety that the lilly is clad with; but *Solomon's*
(as is also most men's and womens) is generally but
artificial: well, if God so cloath the grass of the
earth, will he not cloath us: if we believe not, we
must have but very little true faith. So that it would
be much better for us to consult how we shall do to
please God, and honour him, and his holy Son,
and divine Name, than to consult what we shall eat
or drink, or how, or where with we shall be cloath-
ed, which things the *Gentiles* sought after, more than
after God. But we knowing that our heavenly Fa-
ther seeth that we have need of all these things, should
chiefly leave it to him, and first seek his kingdom and
righteousness.

Verse 33. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and
his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto
you.*

Verse 34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow:
for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself:
sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Here is a glorious gospel promise; upon seeking
the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all these
things shall be added to us, viz. meat, drink, and
raiment, the necessary things that we want, to sup-
port us in these lower regions, or while we are
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here in this world ; but then, withal, let us remember it must be our first work, it must be the chief desire of our souls ; it must be first in several senses ; first, as to our young and tender years ; first in the morning of every day ; first, in respect of, and before all other things ; first, as it hath pleased God to give us a being in this world, and being in the prime and flower of our years, we should then devote our souls to God, and his work and service, and enter into covenant with him, with full purpose of heart, and design of soul, to keep the same truly and inviolably ; for it would be better not to make covenant, than to make it, and break it ; neither should we slight or put off the work of God till we are old, and in our declining years ; as though we give him the refuge, and broken end of our days, and conclude, it will better become me when I am old to serve him : oh, no ! learn the fear of God truly, and practise it when thou art young, and thou wilt not easily depart from it when thou art old : as thou wilt find it hard to get into a holy life and conversation, when thou hast been spending thy youth in folly and vanity : *Remember thy Creator therefore in the days of thy youth, before the evil day come.* The autumn of man's years is here in divers respects called the evil day : Oh ! 'tis exceeding sweet and precious to see and be sensible of an innocent life, and modest, sober conversation, in youth ; when they are in their blooming flow'ry years, to be scented with grace, and truth, must needs be affecting. When youth are laden with fruits of grace, and of the holy Spirit, how pleasant is the taste of it ; it generally relishes well with all men, and naturally brings praise to God, as well as peace to the soul. May the youth of this present generation, as also generations to come, be such holy plants, that God's right hand may be seen in planting them : when after being fruitful and doing the work and service of their day, and answering the noble

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the end of God in making and planting them here in this world, they may be transplanted into the eternal kingdom of heaven; which doubtless, they will, who first seek his kingdom, and the righteousnesses of it.

2dly, If we consider that our life and being is daily granted to us, and we supported by the goodness and providence of almighty God every day, it is but just that he should have the first or prime of our thoughts in the morning of the day; and he (being the first and the last) ought to be last, as well as the first, in our thoughts, also in the evening. The royal psalmist saith, *If I prefer not Jerusalem before my chiefest joy, then let my right-hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,* Psalm cxxxvii 6. much more ought we to prefer our Creator to all things, and to have our thoughts on him, first and foremost in all things, and every day.

3dly, For what are the things of this world in comparison of those that are to come, all these are fading and transitory; but the things of that which is to come, are durable, and permanent; and therefore ought to be first and chief in our mind. That which is chief in our hearts, may be said to have the first place there; *One thing* (says a servant of God) *I have desired, and that will I seek after, that I might dwell in the house of God all the days of my life,* Psal. xxvii.

4. This was the first or prime thing, which he and we was, and are to seek for, and after. As for the morrow, we need not be too thoughtful or anxious concerning or about it, for we know not whether we shall live to enjoy it, so that as Christ says, *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Chap. vii. Verse 1. *Judge not, that ye be not judged;*

Verse 2. *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

A great and wise expression, or sentence, from a righteous and just judge; the Judge in heaven, and of earth, to whom all power in both is given; by which we may easily perceive we are to be very careful in our judgment and censures of others, and that we are not rash and censorious therein; considering that with what judgment we judge our neighbours, or fellow-mortals, with such shall we also be judged ourselves, and that measure which we measure out to others, shall be filled to us again, when it comes to our turn to be judged, or censured by others, for any thing which we have done or said, we are ready then to cry out for charity; are we so careful to be charitable in our judging and censuring others?

It is better to suspend personal judgment, without we could see the hearts of men; and if we think we do, then to imitate God and Christ, who mixes mercy and love with judgment; rashness and extreams in judgment, being commonly hurtful.

Verse 3. *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?*

Verse 4. *Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine own eye.*

Verse 5. *Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

Most true it is, that the transgressions of others are most affecting to those who fear God, and this is not intended to hinder the good from reproveing the evil; but shews us, that we must be clear of evil in ourselves when we reprove others, else the guilt of hypocrisy will be, and is by Christ cast upon us, and laid at our door. We are more to look at our own failings, than at the failings of others; and to take special care that we are clear of that which we reprove others for; and is it not deceit, to set up

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for reformers of others, when there are great defects in ourselves? It is too generally a fault in poor mortals to be quicker sighted to see the faults of others, than their own. 'Tis worthy reciting our Saviour's words to the *Jews*, who brought the woman taken in adultery to him, and told him by their law she ought to die; he answers, *He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone at her*, John viii. 7. So they being guilty and convicted in their own consciences, left her to Christ, and went their way; and when we have done what we can to convince others of sin, we must leave them to Christ at last; whether we are in sin or without it; but we shall be the better able to help to reform others, if we are clear from guilt in our hearts.

Verse 6. *Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.*

When we see the biting and persecuting nature, and dirty selfish spirit of men, it is to little purpose, generally, to cast before them the precious pearl of truth, or to shew unto them the deep mysteries of the kingdom of God, or the light of life, they being in a brutish spirit; but when people are sober, and shew forth humanity and moderation, then are holy things valuable to them, and the things of Christ's kingdom, and his doctrine, precious in their eyes, or esteem: wherefore it greatly behoveth Christ's ministers to minister that to the people which is suitable for them, and rightly to divide between the precious and the vile, and to give to every one their portion, according to their deeds; mercy to whom mercy, and judgment to whom judgment belongs; without partiality, and without hypocrisy or deceit; and not to flatter and daub those who are in the doggish and swinish nature.

Verse 7. *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*

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Verse 8. *For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.*

Verse 9. *Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone?*

Verse 10. *Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?*

Verse 11. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

Our kind and tender redeemer would stir up and provoke souls to prayer and supplication; he has been liberal in his holy advice; and to stir us up to it, here are moving expressions, if thy heart be open to receive them: can we have easier terms if we were to make them to ourselves with the Lord, than to ask and have; seek, and find; knock, and the gates are opened; provided we ask in faith tenderly, and seek in humility, and knock with divine wisdom and submission? Our Lord's own practice shews that we should be tender, submissive, and fervent in prayer; and then the fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much with the Lord. Christ urgeth us to it, and brings ourselves for example; *What man is there among you, who if his son ask bread, or a fish, will he give him a stone or a serpent?* Surely no: no father would deal thus with his child; but when his child is hungry, and wants and asks bread, he gives it to him: so when the Almighty sees our hunger, and we tenderly seek divine assistance and refreshment from him, he, in his own time, satisfies such souls with bread from above, and the thirsty with living waters out of the wells of salvation: oh! blessed be his holy name for evermore. Evil men know how to give good things to their children, therefore we may well conclude that our heavenly father knows how to give with much more discretion and understanding.

standing the good things of his kingdom, to true, asking, seeking, knocking, or praying souls.

Verse 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.*

Well may this be called the GOLDEN RULE; for if we square our lives and actions by it, it will certainly mete us out the true way to happiness and glory. We are generally too apt to say, when any one doth ill to another, "Would he be willing to be so served himself?" And if we followed this rule in all our concerns, it would be well; whether in relation to public or private business; whether in trade or religion, or in our domestic affairs; the law and the prophets point at it, and our Saviour plainly lays it down for a rule for us to walk by.

Verse 13. *Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*

Verse 14. *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

It is afflicting to consider how natural it is for people to walk in this broad way, and that they who walk in it are many; for here is room for people to walk if they are proud, whoremongers, adulterers, thieves, swearers, liars, drunkards, covetous, or in any other evil course of life, this broad way hath room enough in it for them to walk in; but let them know, it leadeth to destruction, and the end is eternal misery, and their many companions will administer no consolation to them, when they lift up their eyes in hell. And whereas the way that leads to life, is called strait; it is only strait to flesh and blood, or the will of unregenerate men: oh! 'tis a pleasant way, exceeding pleasant, when brethren walk together in love and unity, *Psal. cxxxiii. 1.* The enemy of mankind would perswade souls that 'tis narrower

than it really is, when they have some faint inclinations to make trial of it. It may truly be said, that, "Blessed are the undefiled in this strait and narrow way, who walk in the law of the Lord, *Psal. cxix. 1.* for, *His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace, Prov. iii. 17.* And although the way to the kingdom was strait and narrow, yet there are hills and valleys therein as well as plains, until we get through the gate to glory: there shall we know no more sorrow, nor pain; but shall praise and glorify God and the Lamb forever.

Verse 15. *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps cloathing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

Verse 16. *Ye shall know them by their fruits: do men gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles?*

Verse 17. *Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

Verse 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

Verse 19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.*

Verse 20. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

The great shepherd and bishop of souls, shews the care which he takes of his sheep, and forwards them to be careful of false prophets, and deceivers; who though they may clothe themselves with words like the true ones, yet inwardly they would destroy all that do not join with, or receive them; and they are for biting the poor harmless sheep of Christ, and if they could, or it were in their power, would devour them, their minds being in the ravening nature. But our holy and all-wise Bishop, that we might be preserved from them, tells us how we may infallibly know them, saying, *Ye shall know them by their fruits,* giving us to understand, the reasonableness of his doctrine and assertion of knowing them by their fruits.

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fruits. Do men gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles, says Christ? Surely no. That is altogether unnatural, as well as unreasonable and impossible. In the grape there is a sweet and pleasant nourishment, those fruits being cordial and wholesome; but it is bad meddling with thistles and thorns, they being generally very unprofitable to mankind, and hurt the good seed, wherever they grow among it. Well, where must we go for the grapes, and the figs? To be sure we must go to the vine, and the fig-tree: Christ is the body of this vine, and his people are the branches, who bring forth such fruit (according to the divine life or sap which they receive) as he taught, and teaches, to his followers. So that if men's words be like the words of angels, if they have never so great parts and endowments; yet if their fruit be evil, if they live in sin, and do iniquity, and bring forth the fruits of malice and rage, or devouring persecution, they then are none of Christ's sheep, though they may have their cloathing: for every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. So if the fruit be evil, the tree is certainly corrupt. Our Lord elsewhere saith, *Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also*, Matt. xii. 33. and to be made truly good (since we are all corrupt by nature, and in the fall) we must be cut off from that nature, and grafted into Christ, who said, *I am the vine, and ye are the branches*, John xv. 5. and then your lives and fruits will be changed. And then, *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire*. It would be very unnatural, and a meer prodigy, for one tree to hew down another, and cast it into the fire, as they are natural trees: but that ax (which John speaks of, Mat. iii. 10.) will be laid to the roots of the corrupt trees, and will hew them down, and they will be cast into

into the fire, as Christ speaks. This is not a destroying the bodies of men that Christ speaks of, but an inward work in the soul, shewing the powerful nature of the dispensation of the gospel of Christ, which is not material cutting, or burning with material fire, or sword: but Christ's word is a fire and sword to cut down and burn up the evil nature in man. The apostle confirms this doctrine of his Master thus, *He that doth righteousness is righteous, but he that sinneth is of the devil*, 1 John ii. 29. and iii. 8. The apostle is plain and full, as is Christ, who repeats his doctrine over again, with, *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them*.

Verse 21. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

It is not our profession that will give us admittance into heaven, or a name of religion, nor religious performances, if we love sin and unrighteousness, nor our praying, preaching, hearing, reading or discoursing of or arguing for Christ, if we do the works of Satan; for there are many who may yet go farther than this, and yet not have admittance into the kingdom of God and our blessed Lord Jesus, as is plainly manifest in the next verse.

Verse 22. *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works?*

Verse 23. *And then I will profess to them, I know ye not; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

So that professing Christ's own name, and prophesying therein, without working the works of God, will not do. Nay, though they may cast out devils, which indeed is a great work, and here is not only one devil in the singular number, but devils in the plural. They say they have cast out devils, and truly there are many devils in poor mortals sometimes,

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times, as was said by them to Christ; *Our name is legion, for we are many.* There are the devils of pride, covetousness, drunkenness, whoredom, theft, envy, murder, lying, swearing, hypocrisy, cheating, backbiting, &c. and abundance more, which cannot easily be named; and though it may be said, and that truly, that all these proceed from the devil, who is an evil spirit; yet it may also be said, that there are many evil spirits; and if all these evil spirits are cast out of man, and others of an evil nature enter him again, his last state is worse than his beginning, as Christ speaks about the strong man armed, who kept the house, till a stronger than he came, who, when he came, spoiled his goods, and dispossessed him; but coming again found the house (or heart) swept and garnished, swept from many immoralities, and garnished with self-righteousness and carnal security; and the man off his watch, and not at home with Christ, who is stronger than satan, he then re-enters, and seven worse spirits with him, *Mat. xii.*

45. So that we had need be on our watch, and keep near to Christ, lest after all our experience, and wondrous works, our last state be worse than our beginning, and we shut out of the kingdom in the end. For these say, that they have done many wonderful works in Christ's name: so that we may work miraculous things, and be sensible of wonderful power and strength from Christ; and yet without persevering in the way of holiness and self-denial, may fall short of heaven. Wherefore it is bad, and of dangerous consequence, to live in sin and iniquity; or to lean towards it, so as to plead for it, or believe we cannot live without it while in this world. For if we live and die in it, we may justly (according to the above doctrine of Christ) expect that he will say unto us in the great day; *Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

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Verse 24. *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.*

Verse 25. *And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.*

Oh! what abundance of excellent sayings, and doctrine, what holy precepts has Christ here recommended to the professors of his name, and to them which believe in him, and the almighty Father and maker of heaven and earth. Surely we are greatly beholden to our Lord Jesus Christ for those plain divine sayings. But to recommend them only is but little, or to read them, or hear them: the keeping and the doing of them is the main thing; the thing that is needful; and to press the practice of them, Jesus has made this apt comparison.

1st, *He that hears them, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man:* and indeed it is great wisdom to keep them (that is, to practise them) and as great folly to live contrary to them, and plead against them.

2dly, *Who built his house upon a rock.* This rock is Christ, the rock of ages, and his holy Spirit, or the holy Ghost, as Christ said to Peter, when Christ was revealed to him: *Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven,* Matt. xvi. 17, 18. "Thou art Peter" (or a stone or rock) thou art a man, though thy name signifies a rock, and as thy name signifies a rock, so "on this rock will I build my church" (that is on the Spirit of the heavenly Father, which revealed Christ to Peter) and the church of Christ so built, "the gates of hell cannot prevail against it." And Peter was one who heard these sayings, and did them, when he had received the holy Ghost or Spirit; for which every true believer ought to pray continually, until he receives it; through the help of which he may, without doubt, keep those holy sayings. For of our-

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selves without it, we cannot do any real good, either in speaking, thinking or acting.

3dly. *And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; because it was founded on a rock.* If rain from above be poured out in wrath on man, for sin and iniquity, and floods of persecution, or the windy words of men come upon this house, it will stand: if sickness and death itself, and many other storms, that we may meet with here, in this low world, should beat against our building, we being built upon the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, shall surely stand them all out, and live through all, if we observe to hear or read Christ's sayings, and to practise the same; then are we on the rock, and shall not fall for that reason.

Verse 26. *And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.*

Verse 27. *And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.*

If we read or hear these sayings, or doctrine of Christ, and do not dwell in the life of it, nor practise the same, it were better we knew it not. For as our Saviour saith, *He that knoweth his master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* And doubtless it is great folly to be sensible of Christ's holy will, and doctrine, and not to do it: if we profess christianity, and to build our profession on Christ, and yet not observe to keep his sayings, the foundation of our building will be but very loose and sandy; and when those rains, and floods, and wind, which Christ speaks of, shall descend and come, and beat against this building, it must needs fall, and the higher his building is, the greater will be the fall of it.

Thus ended the best sermon that ever was preached by man; in which is set forth the great truths
22. II.

of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, with blessings and rewards to the righteous, and holy believers in him, who put in practice his precepts; and reproof to the disobedient, and unfaithful, with promises of the kingdom of heaven to the former, and to the latter a being shut out of it. And when he had ended his doctrine for that time, and finished his divine sayings, the people were smitten with it, to admiration, as well indeed they might.

Verse 28. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at his doctrine.

Verse 29. For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

They were astonished at his doctrine, as well they might, for it excelled even the law, and went beyond it, as when he tells them, 'twas said of old time, or in the law, *Thou shalt not kill*: he taught that we must not be angry without cause. And whereas the law gives liberty to hate our enemies; he charges us to love them, and pray for them, and do good to them; again the law prohibits adultery; Christ prohibits lusts, both in the eye, and in the heart. And whereas the law commanded to perform their oaths to the Lord; Christ commands not to swear at all. Now those who are not angry, it is not likely they should kill; those who love their enemies cannot hate or destroy them; those who have not lust in their hearts or eyes, cannot commit adultery; and those who never swear, cannot forswear themselves: all which he with divine power and authority from above taught. He was not dry and formal like the Scribes: so likewise his ministers, and the preachers of his gospel, should wait on him, to be endued with a measure of his divine spirit and holy grace, that the hearers might be edified, and the Father, Son, and Spirit, might have the glory, who over all is worthy for ever.

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SINCE I wrote the above (which was written at sea in my voyage from *Barbados* to *London*) I have heard that a learned man hath wrote upon this excellent sermon of Christ (which far exceeds what I have done) at which I rejoyce; for the more Christ is glorified, and his faithful followers edified, the greater is our cause of rejoycing; and if it exceeds this, it is no wonder, this being done by one who doth not profess to understand grammar, neither is a master of words, nor scarcely of good *English*. Peradventure through the meanness of the instrument, the glory of God, and praise of Christ, may the more appear; as said Christ, *Out of the mouths of babes thou hast ordained praise, or strength*: and again, *Thou hast revealed these things to babes and sucklings*. And the Jews marvelled that the apostles of Christ should know the things of God, being unlearned men. But I had a concern working a long time on my mind; and could not be easy nor satisfied until I had made some little essay towards this work; and considering my own weakness, it kept me back a great while; but in giving up to the work, I had peace and inward satisfaction therein: for I thought it my duty to publish and promote, as much as I well could, the doctrine and sermon of Christ, my Lord and Master; since the very life and marrow of true christianity is therein to be found, in a very great degree; and, without controversy, those who live up, and according to the doctrine here laid down by Christ in this sermon, will be blessed in this world, and that to come, of whatsoever denomination they may be.

A. D. 1718.

J. C.

Some

Some truly tender scruples of conscience, about that sort of prayer, called the common prayer, as used by the members of the church of England.

1. **A**S to the reading the holy scripture, either privately or openly, that I am not against, but would encourage it in all christians and true believers in Christ, and we ought to excite one another thereto, and more especially to put in practice what we read to be our duty, otherwise the holy letter will kill (as saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 6.) which is to be understood when we practise contrary to what we read therein. As for example, where our Lord saith, *Every idle word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof, in the day of judgment.* Mat. xii. 36. Again, "God will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain, Exod. xx. 7." "That servant that knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 47." These, and many more portions of the holy scripture, are condemning and killing to those who live in sin and evil, which the letter is absolutely against, and without true repentance, accompanied with amendment of life, though the holy bible be read every day, it will but add to our condemnation. But if people truly repent of the evil of their ways, and awake to righteousness, and sin not, as the holy scriptures themselves hold, and Christ taught, then unto such souls, they are a rich treasure, and a cabinet full of precious jewels, "able to make the man of God wise to salvation, through faith" in Christ, by the influence of the holy Ghost or Spirit, it is not the reading (divinely inspired writings, or) the bible, which is scrupled; but the formal reading of formal composed prayers and songs, at set times, instituted by such whose principle is, that there is now no divine revelation, and that we can't live without sinning, while we are

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In this life, according to the tenor of the common-prayer; holding that we sin as long as we live, as if God's power was not stronger to preserve out of sin, than the devil is to keep us in sin, contrary to the work and doctrine of the holy apostles, who were sent of God to turn people from satan's power, to the power of God; whose glorious, eternal power, is above the power of sin, death, and the devil.

In the common prayer some unsound words and also some scripture expressions, perverted to a wrong use, I would a little open, or write a few words concerning.

1st, "As to that expression in the common prayer, that we are miserable sinners."

2^{dly}, "And that we are full of bruises and putrifying sores."

3^{dly}, "And from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in us."

4^{thly}, "And that we have left undone the things which we ought to do; and do those things which we ought not to do; and this to be repared for life."

First, Then if people must be miserable sinners all their days, to what end did Christ come into the world and preach the gospel, and suffer death, the painful death of the cross? Did he not come to put an end to sin, and to destroy the works of the devil, whose works are sin? Did he not preach against sin, both within and without? Witness the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of the evangelist *Matthew*. Yea, his birth, life, preaching, suffering, death and resurrection, and ascension into glory, were all against sin, the devil, death and darkness, and all the works and deeds thereof. Christ died for our sins, and we should die for them, and live to him: he came to save us from the act of sin, as well as the imputation of it; and takes away the guilt of sin, on condition of true repentance and amendment of life, as the doc-

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doctrine of Christ and his apostles do largely and plainly demonstrate, as any who are come to the years of discretion, and who can but read the holy scriptures, may plainly discover.

The apostle saith, *Whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are pure, just, and of good report, seek after those things.* And again, *No unclean thing can enter the kingdom of heaven*; but certainly all sin is unclean. Read over the holy scriptures, from the beginning to the end, their nature and tendency is against all sin, and as it is true, that we all have been sinners, surely therefore all true christians, and true believers in Christ, have cause reverently to bow, and to be truly and humbly thankful, that Christ, our great Lord, by his offering himself for us, hath taken away that imputation; so that now through true faith, and belief in Christ, accompanied with true repentance, and amendment of life, the imputation of our former sin is taken away; for which cause we praise God; and adore his eternal majesty for ever.

2dly, As to the word *miserable*; a christian may indeed be poor; but since Christ is come to make us happy and comfortable, through the hope of eternal salvation, in his name and power (as we are not to think ourselves better than we are) so we cannot say nor think we are miserable, unless we are without God and Christ; and then we are miserable indeed; but no mortal can be miserable, who hath Christ; for *he that hath the Son, hath life* (eternal life) *abiding in him*: to be truly in Christ, is to be truly happy; this doctrine is as clear as the sun at noon day, or as a morning without clouds: a soul, when it comes to see itself undone without a Saviour, and see sin to be exceeding sinful, and is ready to cry to the almighty, Lord, help, or I perish! save me, or I am undone for ever! then the soul seeth itself miserable; but it is for want of Christ: and when Christ is come into, or unto the soul, then its misery vanisheth, or flieth away; but from day to day, and week to week, yea,

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all the days of one's life; to be miserable sinners, is a miserable case indeed, destroying the very nature of christianity: wherefore, some tender, conscientious souls, cannot join with such miserable sinners and sayers, who neither say nor do that which they ought.

3dly, As to these sayings, *We are full of bruises and putrifying sores, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and that there is no soundness in us.*

Can any congregation of such people as these (if they say truly, and if they do not say truly, what will the consequence be, let the wise in heart judge) can, I say, such a people be the church of Christ, or his spouse, or beautiful bride? Christ saith, *If the inside be clean, the outside will be clean also*; and he came to cleanse the souls of poor mortals, and to heal them, and wash them from sin, and doth it by his spiritual baptism, and the fire of his word; also the above-said church and people, contrary to this putrified and unsound, constant and continual confession, do both promise and vow, that they will forsake the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh, and walk in God's holy will and commandments, all the days of their lives: the very highest pitch of perfection any man or christian can attain in this life! and yet contrary to those vows and solemn covenants, they tell the Almighty from time to time, that they are unsound, nay, that there is no soundness in them; but that they are putrified from head to foot (as above) and by their common practice intend to tell him so as long as they live in this life: this is unsound work indeed: and truly those who are tenderly conscientious may well scruple to join with it, or with those who are in such ways, words and works.

Those bruised, putrified, sore and unsound souls, are therefore tenderly, in christian love, advised to come to Christ, the physician of value, and great

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doctor of the soul, that he may heal them, and wash their sinful, putrified souls, and unsound hearts, "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of his word and spirit." *Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you,* saith our Saviour, *John xv. 3.* They were cleansed, by putting his word in practice; for saith Christ, *Mat. vii. 24. He that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man;* so, consequently, he that doth them not is foolish, sinful, and unclean.

4thly, And farther, say they, *We have left undone those things which we ought to have done.* Now doing the truth, and doing that which is right, is what we ought to do; and committing sin, is that which we ought not to do: certainly any man of sense and understanding, would think it mockery, if his children or servants should serve him so from time to time, and make a common practice of it: by this confession (if it be genuine) they must needs know better than they practise or do, they knowing what they ought to do, but not doing it; and our Lord Jesus Christ saith positively, *He that knows his master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* And again, *Be ye not like the Scribes and Pharisees; for they say, and do not; therefore be ye not like unto them.*

But what can be expected from those who say they sin in their best duties? And if so, they sin whenever they read the common prayers; and by the same rule, the oftner they read them, the oftner they sin; wherefore, how can a sincere, devout soul, who unfeignedly loves the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to keep his commandments (for that is to love him truly, and according to his own definition of it; *If ye love me, keep my commandments,* saith Christ) I say, how can any such sincere soul join with such wrong doers and sayers? It must needs be an unsafe practice to do what one knows should not be done; the nature of

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Such doings being very provoking, either to God or man: what man in the world would like it, in either son or servant?

Oh! what would become of poor, degenerate man, if the Almighty was not very indulgent, if he was not a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great loving-kindness to poor mortals.

5thly, And as to their singing *David's* psalms in metre; how often do they sing that which is not true as to themselves, and also that which is not according, but contrary to their states and conditions? As when they sing, "That they water their couch with their tears; and that they practise what they know, when they confess they do that which they ought not to do, and leave undone that which they ought to do."

The apostle said, he would sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also. And again, *We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom: viii. 26. In the primitive times of christianity, they prayed and sung as they were helped by the holy Ghost; or spirit, and not by book, or stinted or set forms; but oh! the primitive soundness of christianity is too much lost and defaced; and therefore some who desire to come again to the primitive soundness and purity of the christian religion, scruple to join with such unsound formalities, and that conscientiously, for the reasons above, and more which might be given.

When such scruples are mentioned, the members of the church of *England* usually reply, that the scriptures vindicate them in their form, which, how well they do so, let it be freely and fairly examined; not for contention, but for edification in the pure love of Jesus.

1st, "The scripture saith, that there was a people that was full of bruises and putrifying sores, &c."

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Ans. But that was in the time of the law, when the people had transgressed the law, and were under the law; for had they done their duty, and kept the law, they could not truly have said so, *Isa. i. 6.* They were then indeed gone astray like lost sheep, and that brought them into that sore, putrified state, and bruised condition, and "their law did not make the comers thereunto perfect; yet (as saith the apostle) the bringing in of a better hope did," which was the hope of the gospel; so that the apostle preaches perfection under the gospel dispensation, though some of our worldly-wise men will not allow of it; and I hope we are not under the law, but under grace; "and the glorious law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath and doth set the true believers free from the law of sin and death;" so that a true christian cannot say truly (with the false and rebellious *Jews*, of whom the prophet there speaks) "That he is full of purifying sores, and that there is no soundness in him, and says it all the days of his life."

2dly, Again the scripture says, *Psal. li. 5. I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

Ans. The psalmist was at that time under deep convictions for the great sins he had been guilty of, in the matter of *Uriah*, *2 Kings xxv. 5.* but by his expressions in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses of the same psalm, it is plain he believed a better state attainable; and surely these expressions cannot be applicable to all men, at all times; for we read of them who were sanctified from the womb; neither can it be reasonably or charitably supposed, that all women (especially chaste and virtuous christians) do all conceive their children in sin, and bring them forth in iniquity; and if it were so (which God forbid) it don't follow, that we must live in it all our days; no surely, if we believe Christ, and the holy scriptures, whose doctrine is holy, and commands holiness in both testaments. And if people would

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would walk in the holy light of Christ, who enlightens every man that cometh into the world, as recorded in holy scripture, they would then be cleansed from their sin, from both the act and the imputation, as saith the apostle, *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have we fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin,* 1 John i. 7.

3dly, "There is none that doth good, no not one," Rom. iii. 12.

Ans. It is beyond all doubt the apostle spoke of the people in their unconverted state; for if they had been come to the work of conversion and regeneration, they must, and it is impossible but they should, do some good; and though there was a time that none did good, it was under the law, and not under grace; and spoken of the unbelievers, and not believers; especially since Christ has brought a covenant of grace, in order to teach and help us to live righteous, virtuous, holy, religious, and sober lives and conversations, Titus ii. 11.

4thly, They object the words of our Saviour to the young man in the gospel, where he calls Christ good Master, asking him, "What good thing he should do that he might inherit eternal life?" Christ answered, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one that is God,* Mat. xix. 17.

Ans. And true it is, in our Lord's sense, for comparing men to Christ (who is God) there is none good; the young man thought he had been speaking to a man like himself, and knew not that he was speaking to the good and gracious Son of the most high God; but if we compare men with men, it must be granted that there is, was, and will be, some good men, women, and children, in that sense and consideration; and our Lord sheweth how we may know these good men, women, and children, *By their fruits ye shall know them,* saith Christ; men do

Not gather grapes off thorns, nor figs off thistles: A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit; wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. How plain is the doctrine of Christ, if people would but lend an obedient ear, and give him a faithful and sincere heart, and serve him in a pure mind, without deceit, or guile, taking up his holy cross (to the corrupt will of man) in true self-denial: the scripture says, *If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,* 1 John i. 9. Where then is the sin, when God has cleansed us from all unrighteousness? Indeed it is very meet, and our duty to confess our sins; they truly say, That,

5thly, The scriptures in sundry places excite us to confess our sins.

Ans. For poor mortals have all sinned, and by their sinful nature, we are all children of wrath, and this is a strong and mighty motive for us in truth to confess our sins, because God is so just and merciful to forgive and to pass by our iniquities; and indeed if the weight of our sins were upon us, and the true sense of the heinousness of sin and evil, it would certainly bow us in deep reverence and humility before the throne of grace, and melt our spirits into true tenderness before the most high and immortal Jehovah; and then it is that he forgives us, and cleanseth us from all iniquity, and would according to the apostle's doctrine, *purify us to himself a peculiar people, zealous of (and for) good works,* and against bad works, and words, and thoughts also: and when God hath so cleansed the soul, then of course these common and often repeated, dry confessions, are full of sin and putrefaction, must fall, and we should fear to offend any more. Let it be tenderly, and in christian love, asked, how often do our common prayer people go into their closets, or privately retire into some secret place, and there

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pour out their cries and tears to the Almighty, and humbly confess their faults to him alone? I ask, would not such an exercise be more acceptable to God, than a popular repetition daily and formally made? This I leave to the consideration of all sober christians, and to the judgment of the truly pious. And how like mockery it looks, as soon as they come from their prayers and confessions, they (many of them) will vainly laugh, and be full of idle words and discourse, and some of them curse and swear, and take the awful and sacred name which they have been addressing (or pretending to address) in vain, and profane that holy name of God and Christ, which they have been using in their devotions, which I have been an eye and an ear witness of many a time, to the sorrow and grief of my soul, and which hath, in part, occasioned these lines; as also hoping it may be a motive to stir up some to a more holy living, and that the name of God and Christ might be glorified, and the precious, dear-bought soul saved. Let us also remember, that the holy scriptures do abundantly require and command us to forsake our sins; the holy text says, *He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy.*

6thly, And whereas the apostle *John*, in his first general epistle, chap. i. verse 8. writes, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves*; from whence it is objected, we ought always to confess our sins.

Ans. Yes, we should do so when ever we commit any, or knowingly do evil; but when the Almighty hath cleansed us from all unrighteousness, then our sins are done away by the grace of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and we are washed by regeneration; then it cannot be true to say we are miserable and putrified sinners, when at the same time also Christ hath purified and sanctified his church and people.

It is true which St. *John* saith, chap. i. verse 10. (that opening and explaining the 8th verse) *If we say*

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we have not sinned, we make him (i. e.) God a liar; for that all have sinned; so that it is plain that he speaks of the state of man before he comes to the work of conversion, or to be renewed by grace; for when we come truly to know Christ, and to see and believe in him, then we witness a change from our corrupt and evil nature, and sinful course of life, which is as clear as the shining of the sun without clouds at noon-day from the same apostle's words which I shall transcribe for information and edification of any who may see this.

The first general epistle of John (the beloved disciple of our Lord Jesus) 3d chap. 6th verse to the 10th:—Whosoever abideth in him (i. e. Christ) sinneth not: Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous: he that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God (and as above) he that committeth sin, is of the devil.

This is naked truth, without any covering, and the very sum and substance of true religion. Oh! that all true christians would lay it to heart, and ponder it in their minds, and then resolve whether they will be sinners to the end of their days, or whether they will repent, and turn from the evil of their ways; the latter of which, that poor mortals may come to witness for themselves, is the desire and prayer of my soul.

If it be further objected, "That our Saviour taught his disciples a form:" He did so; and a glorious form it is; and they did as they pray'd, and

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were taught of Christ, and so they did it truly, and in true faith, believing they should witness what they said and pray'd to be fulfilled. *Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory; for ever. Amen.*

Christ said to some of old, *Ye are of your Father the devil, because his works ye do: and all sin is his work, and by our works (as above) we are manifest, whether we are the children of God, or of the devil.*

A. D. 1717.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND in Ireland, A. D. 1718.
Containing a relation of some sorrowful instances of the sad effects of INTEMPERANCE, as a warning to young people.

Prov. xii. 2. *A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord: but a man of wicked devices will be condemn.*

Verse 7. *The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*

Isa. v. 22. *Woe to them who are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.*

The preface to the tenth edition of this letter to a friend.

Temperate reader,

THE longer we live in the world, the more we see the danger and many mischiefs, miseries and inconveniencies, intemperance occasions to mankind, not only in eating, cloathing, buying and selling, &c. but particularly in that great sin of drinking to excess. And though a risque is run of incurring the displeasure of some

some ill-natur'd over-lovers of strong liquors, the which hath been experienced by the author, through some of the former impressions; yet they having found such general acceptance in many parts of the world, and being serviceable to people of all persuasions, I for the further service of poor mortals, adventure to put forth this tenth edition, with this additional preface; in order (if possible) to persuade all rational souls to forsake so destructive and vile an evil: which gross sin hath these bad effects attending it (with many more that might be set down) which affects both the aged and the youth; for whose sakes, viz. the youth, it was at first chiefly intended, in order to stir them up to the love of pure religion, and pious and virtuous living.

1st, Then, In the aged, it hath these bad effects, viz. They are bad examples to their youth, who when reproved, may reply, My father before me loved strong liquors, as well as I: he loved a glass of wine: he loved a bowl of punch; he loved good cyder, and good ale, and would be merry with it, and why mayn't I, as well as he! He was a wise, good man, when he was sober; and pray where is the harm of loving good liquor, and being merry?

I answer; the harm is in the immoderate and extravagant use of it. It is only the excess which this letter detects, and is intended to discourage. I have known some who have quarrelled with public preaching, because they have been guilty of the faults spoke against: and the author expects to be buffeted for this publication, by some of these mighty sons to drink wine, and to mingle strong drink (i. e. punch, setterena, tiff, flip, &c.) I had like to have forgot samphson, as I have several others, which so overcomes these men of might, as to get from them their precious time, which cannot be bought with money, and their money, besides health and credit, understanding and reason, and all. And pray where is the difference then between the man and the beast, though the man be full of days?

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What can we say to the youth of such parents (that will avail), while their parents shew them such evil examples? And as it is in that, so it is in all other evils, parents examples are very hurtful in evil things, tho' very helpful in that which is good. If a man sees a youth to be out of order, and reproves him for being in drink, evil-speaking, pride, covetousness, &c. and be guilty of the same, his child may answer, Why, father, I had not done so, if I had not seen thee (or you) do it? And it being an incumbent duty in a father, mother, master, or mistress, to reprove their youth for evil; if we are not clear in ourselves of what we reprove in our children or servants, and our children or servants miscarry through our bad example, what a melancholy reflection will that be to us, if rightly considered! which indeed would be this, I have been instrumental to my poor child's ruin and destruction! a melancholy reflection to any sober christian!

Also, except there is a large income, instead of taking care to put the youth in a reputable way to live in the world, it brings them to poverty: and if there is a large estate, it puts them in the way to spend it. And, oh! how many are spending their precious time in taverns, and ordinaries, and at the same time their wives and children suffering and weeping at home? And some sober, modest women (for the men are mostly addicted to drinking to excess) would suffer unspeakable hardships before they would expose their husbands; and indeed they that do it in such a modest way, being forced to it by such ill practices, are much more to be pitied than blamed.

2dly, Concerning the youth, it mightily hurts them, as it doth the aged also, as to their religion, reputation, health and estate, &c.

1st, As to their religion, it not only clouds their understanding, and darkens the nobility thereof, but it unfit them for all and every religious duty.

2dly, Some who value a good name, had rather lose their lives, than lose their reputation through immoderate drinking!

drinking. For if the youth be single, and addicted to immoderate drinking, no wise and virtuous person will tie themselves to them for life by marriage; which state of life, to a wise and virtuous pair, is far exceeding in happiness all other company or conversation whatsoever. It is better to be one of these than to enjoy a kingdom: and, on the other hand, 'tis better to be a slave in Turkey, than to be married to an intemperate person.

3dly, Intemperance destroys the health of the body, which we generally esteem before wealth. And if a man was a king, prince, or duke, if he did not enjoy his health, what good would all his honour, power, and wealth do him? Oh! what abundance of young people have destroyed themselves by this sin? As it is written, The wicked do not live out half their days: and where this sin is growing general in a country, that country is growing to its ruin and destruction. It wastes the people, decays the trade, and is very destructive to religion, and an inlet to Atheism. Good people are afraid to live in such a country, and bad people flock to it, and often make their exit in it.

4thly, And many a fair estate hath been embazzled and spent through intemperance, which honest parents, with great labour, care and industry, have got together, and left to their sons and daughters, who have extravagantly spent upon their lusts; and thereby have brought injury on themselves, their fathers, and their posterity, whenever it has pleased God that they have left any behind them; besides (which is worst of all) dishonouring God, and bringing a scandal on the christian religion.

Some of our wise kings and queens in Great Britain, being sorrowfully affected with the heinousness of this great sin, have made strict laws against intemperance: and where the legislative authority makes little or no provision against it, or when they do make any, or do not take care to put it in practice, such a state or colony

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must needs be in a declining condition. And for particular families and persons, we may see too much of this evil in our neighbourhood, almost in all parts of the world, which causeth solid, sober, pious, virtuous, and truly religious christians to mourn, and humbly to bow before the most high God, begging of him, for Christ's sake, that He, by his mighty power, would be pleased to reform the unregenerate world.

This is the prayer and fervent desire of an intire lover of mankind, both body and soul, and who desires their welfare in this, and the world to come.

T. G.

*A letter to a friend. Bardados, 7th 1st month,
1718-19.*

My dear friend,

IT is long since I had a line from thee ; but not long since I thought of thee and thine, with friends of your nation ; where I know the Lord hath a seed, who loves him, and doth delight and desire to serve him, and are accounted to him for a chosen generation ; and that this generation may spread and prosper in the earth, is my earnest travel in spirit both night and day, at times and seasons. There is also an exercise upon my mind for the off-spring of this seed, the children of those men and women, who have confessed the name of Christ before men, in a holy, self-denying life, and sober conversation ; and I do certainly know, that many pious souls join with me in this exercise, bowing the knee to the Lord of sabbaths for the peace, prosperity, and eternal welfare of the present arising generation. Oh ! how exercising it is to good men and women to see their youth take those ways which lead to destruction, and go in company with the wicked, whose ways lead to the utter ruining of

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both body and soul, and whose steps take hold on hell.

It is a great evil which many are prone to (*i. e.*) *'Keeping of vain and idle company,* which has brought many a young man, and young woman, to utter ruin and destruction, both body and soul. how many fair estates have been wasted! how many fine youths destroyed by keeping evil company, and by excess in drinking, is really lamentable to consider! it keeps the poor in poverty; it makes the rich many times poor, and brings both rich and poor into disgrace; it breaks and destroys the health and natural good constitution of the body, and instead thereof fills it with misery and pain; and which is yet more, it destroys the soul, which is the most noble part of the man; so that it is a sore three-fold evil, but the last the worst, by how much the soul is the more lasting and better part: several terrible instances of this nature I have met with in my travels among the children of men, three or four of which I may inform thee of; and it may be affecting unto thee, as it hath often been to my mind, when I have thought thereon.

The first instance, of a young man, given to ill company, and hard drinking.

THE first is of a certain beautiful young man, a physician by profession, who was much addicted to ill company, and to drink hard, and was sometimes visited with strong convictions; in one of which visitations he sent for me, and told me his condition, and made solemn covenants, if God would but that once spare him, he would not do the like evil again. At that time it did please the Almighty to spare him; but he soon forgot how it had been with him; and fell into the same sin again; altho' he had a most notable admonition in a dream but a little before. His dream was this, which is very remarkable; we

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being then at sea, in sight of *Great Britain*, He saw in his dream a great and spacious town, the buildings high, and streets broad; at which he landed, and going up the street, he espied a large sign, on which was written in great golden letters, *S H A M E*, to which he went, and at the door stood a woman, with a cann of drink in her hand; who asked him to drink; To which he reply'd, *With all his heart*, for he said, *he had drank nothing but water a great while*: so he took the cann, and drank a hearty draught, which, as he said, *made him merry*, and he went reeling up the street, when behold on a sudden, a grim fellow met him, and arrested him in the name of the governor of the place, before whom he brought him. This governor, he said, was like a great black dog, the largest that ever he saw, who grinned at him, and passed sentence on him, and sent him to prison, there to lie for ever. He told me this dream, with such and emphasis, as made me to tremble, which was thus interpreted to him; I told him, that he was an ingenious young man, and might easily discern the interpretation of this dream, which to me seem'd to be ominous to him: *The great town and high buildings, is thy great and high profession; the sign on which S H A M E was writ, with the woman with the cann at the door, sheweth the great shame of the sin of drunkenness, and that it is thy weakness; and that grim fellow, that arrested thee, is death, who will arrest all mortals; and the great black dog, the governor of the place, is the devil; who, when his servants have served him to the last, will torment them for ever.*—God forbid, it is but a dream, was his answer to me. I said, it was a very significant one to him.

About three days after, the same person went on board a ship, whose loading was wine and brandy; the master gave a cann of wine to him, and said the same words, as the woman said to him in his dream, and he answered with the same expressions, and

it had the same effect upon him; for he took such a hearty draught as made him too merry, in so much that he overset the boat, and was drowned, much in drink: and I seeing him sink down, and his dream so punctually fulfilled, I was very heavy in my mind for several days.

Oh! methinks I could wish that the many righteous judgments of the most High, might effectually work on the hearts of those people, who are in the flower of their age, to their conversion and salvation.

The second instance, of a merchant, addicted to the like destructive practices.

THE second is of a merchant, about thirty-five years of age, whom I saw take leave of, and bid adieu to this world: he was one who had spent much time in keeping unprofitable company and overdrinking, which practice wasted his strength and flesh, as it did his time and money, and brought him into a deep consumption; as it has done many to my certain knowledge; besides bringing the racking painful distemper of the gout, and many other miseries; so that at last it brought him to his chamber, and then to his bed: and in his sickness he several times sent for me, and made serious acknowledgments of his former mispent time, and hoped, if the Lord would spare him to be more careful for the time to come. But he was no longer to be trusted here in this world; for he went not out till he was carried in his coffin: he held my hand fast in his, until he died, and was sensible to the last.

One day, as he lay on his death-bed, he called me to him, into his chamber, and, charged me to caution the young people to be careful how they keep (and spend their time in) evil company, for it had been his ruin, and now lay as a great and heavy burden on his conscience: oh! says he, if they did but feel one quarter of an hour,

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what I feel, they would never keep such company any more: tell this to my former companions.

And indeed there is a great deal of hurt done by young men getting together to drink wine, or other strong drink: I wish the woe, mentioned in the holy scriptures may not be the portion of many of them; who are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink; and sit late at it, which many times brings sufferings on parents, wife, children, and servants, as well as themselves; and is a very disorderly practice, being a reproach to all christian societies and families, wherever such things are.

There is a great concern upon me against this growing evil in our young generation; and I hope, in Christ our Lord, that divers heads of families will come under the like exercise in themselves: and then, if our youth will neither hear nor fear the Lord, nor us, we shall be clear, and their blood will be on their own heads, as a worthy and honourable elder, and man of God (of our nation) said: one of whose offspring is the subject of the third particular, that I shall mention to thee, of the many I have been acquainted with, in my pilgrimage here, in and on this part of the globe of the earth and sea; for these are but few instances of the many that I have met withal: I may therefore thus proceed.

The third instance of another young man, who much embraced the same destroying delights.

THE fifth of the first month, at Bridge-town, in Barbados, S. E. son of W. E. died. His death was sudden; and, as was reasonably supposed, he destroyed himself by drinking, and undue company keeping, and sitting long at it. A person to whom he himself had told it, told me, "That he and four more, at one sitting, drank above twenty quarts of double-distilled rum punch; which put him in a violent fever:" so that he ran about the streets, with

with a naked sword, and talked of killing one of the neighbours, in this drunken fit. The next day he came to me, and asked me, *Whose door the blood would have lain at, if he had, in that fit of disorder, killed any body?* By which query, I thought he was not yet rightly come to himself; because there were some ordinary reports about the town concerning him, he reckoned those who broached and spread those reports, would have been culpable, and must have answered for his murder, if he had committed any: but this was but covering his sin.

He seemed to fall out with religion too; for he said, *He would come no more to the worship, till he should have justice done him, as to the reports:* tho' poor soul, he had the more need to present himself before his Maker, and bow before the most high God, and repent in great humiliation. The same day in which he neglected his duty, he was taken sick, and that day week was buried. He sent for me, and I went to him: he had but little sense of his end, as I could perceive, and remained so till the night he died. I was by him when he died, and saw him fetch his last breath: A few minutes before he gave up the ghost, he trembled and shook exceedingly, and shrieked out to the astonishment of all those present, which pierced my very soul within me: for he seemed to go out of the world in an extream great agony.

I never saw any depart the world any ways like him; and indeed it was very amazing, and greatly affected my mind with sorrow: for I thought he was very unfit to die. Oh! methinks I could heartily wish, that such objects might be as so many strong motives, to stir up and to awaken the offspring of good men and virtuous women (as also any professing christianity) to fear the Lord, and walk in his ways, whose ways lead to life, in which the sting of death is taken away.

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The children of godly parents have much to answer for, in slighting or neglecting the wholesome counsel, good advice, and faithful admonition, of their faithful and careful parents: whom they disgrace and dishonour, contrary to the command of God, who says, *Honour thy parents, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*: and none can truly honour parents, who dishonour God their Maker.

The fourth instance of a young woman who often absented herself from meetings, for the sake of much bad company.

THE fourth instance, which I shall give thee, is concerning a young woman, of about 25 years of age; who was brought up very finely, tenderly, and delicately with her lockets, and chains of gold, and waiting-maid: but her parents living too high for their income, broke in peoples debt; and their children as they grew up, were put to their shifts. What pity it is! that youth are not brought up to some business, whereby they may get a livelihood in the world, if their parents should drop before them: and though parents may have a handsome interest in this world, yet it has been thought by some great, as well as wise men, that to put out youths to trades and business, is both profitable and honourable: instances of the evil consequences of the contrary, have been very many, as woful experience doth daily teach us; and this young woman was one: for falling into evil company, she ran into debt, and was put into prison; where was a murderer, whom, it is said, she was necessary to loose from his chains; and for so doing was put in chains herself, along with him, when he was taken again: and there, instead of her gold chain, she took up with an iron one; and in a little time, was tried for her life: and was in expectation of death; and in her great distress, she

sent for me, and entreated me to come and see her die, and much lamented her condition: "oh! said she, that I might be a warning to all young people, to be careful that they keep not evil company, and spend their time which should be spent in worship, in airy company, and other vain diversions, when they should be doing their duty to God." And then she would weep bitterly; she being very penitent, it very much affected me; and I told her, "That I did believe, if she in her heart was clear, and no ways consenting to the murder, her life would be given her: but then woe and misery would be her portion, if she did not amend her ways." And as I was leaving her, she charged me, "to warn young people that they might be careful that they spend not their time in vanity, and to keep out of vain and wicked company," which she said had brought her to that misery and shame: "And that they should take the counsel and advice of good friends (which if I had done, said she) I had not brought reproach on my friends, and on my parents."

In a little time after, she was brought to trial, and acquitted by the jury. I saw her once since, and reminded her of her duty; which she said, "She hoped to perform; and that it should be a warning to her while she lived in this world." And that such examples may be a warning to all people, is the earnest desire of a lover of souls, and servant of Jesus.

T. C.

Since I wrote the above, there being a person in this place, who would be sometimes overtaken in drink, I sent it to him to copy over, hoping it might have some good effect on him: and truly before he had copy'd the relation of the first person, he was so smitten with the sense of the judgment of the Almighty, that he cried out, even to roaring,

and said, "he felt the fear of God, and was told, of his sin, and repent, lest thy son, he dying informed by his misdeeds, more faithful under deep distress, this as a comfort further advice, a noble post to mention, seek meet, on my mind it might be

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and said, "He was a condemned person, and that he felt the fire of hell." He sent for me, and several others, and begg'd of us to pray for him: he was told, "That the hand of God was upon him for his sin, and desired to take warning in time, and repent, lest the Lord should cut him off in his iniquity." The Lord did accordingly cut off this person, he dying suddenly, by hard drinking, as I was informed by a letter from *Barbados*; tho' he promised, "If the Lord would spare him then, to be more faithful for the time to come;" and was then under deep inward exercise of mind. I mention this as a corroboration of the above instances, for further admonition. This person was in a considerable post in that government: his name I forbear to mention, for divers reasons. If thou (and friends) see'st meet, I could desire, from the exercise that is on my mind, that this might spread; peradventure it might be a stroke upon some for their good.

A LETTER to Aquila Paca, high sheriff of Baltimore county, in the province of Maryland, and to other friends there.

Barbados, 1st of 12th mo. 1718.

Loving friend Aquila Paca,

MEETING here with captain Savadde, bound for your river, I found a concern on my mind to send a few lines remembering the good opportunities I had at your meeting in that neighbourhood, together with those few poor honest souls that I met with there; and I desire thee to give my dear love in Christ to them.

Dear friend, I am tenderly concerned in the love of God, and his dear Son, to beg of thee, that thou let not the world, nor any thing therein, either the riches, pleasures, or friendship thereof, draw thy mind from that measure of grace which hath been manifested to thee; for God hath visited thee in his

tender love and mercy, as thou well knowest, and hath often begot good desires in thee, and convinced thee of the holy truth, as it is in Jesus. Oh! faith my soul, that thou may more and more grow therein, to thy bringing forth much good fruit, to the glory of God, and the eternal good of that part in thee which shall never die.

Salute me to thy wife and children, and the neighbours, and their children also, all whom I wish well in this world, and also in that which is to come, the same I wish to all those who love Christ, so as to keep his commandments.

If thou seekest meet, thou mayst read what follows at the close of your meeting on a first day, which meeting I hope you keep up in order to worship God in Christ's name; for to such as meet in his name, he hath promised to be in the midst of them, wherever they so meet; the which he hath graciously fulfilled at many times.

Dear friends, it is in my mind to visit you with the salutation of brotherly love, in our holy Lord Jesus Christ, and let you know, that though I have been long absent from you in body, yet have I been often present in spirit with you, and you have been often in my mind, with prayers to the Lord for your growth in the holy truth which he hath been pleased to make known to you, and many times I have desired of the Almighty, that he would be pleased to preserve a seed in your parts that should serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation. I have also desired that the Lord would visit your young ones, and bring them to the knowledge of his truth: and I pray God, that the tender visitation that was on divers of them, when I was present with you, may by them never be forgotten, but that they may be plants of righteousness, of God's own right-hand planting.

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And, dear friends, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, in the name of Christ, remembering how you have been visited with the heart-melting power, and the sweet presence of the most High, in your silent waiting on, and worshipping him in his holy Spirit and in truth, as well as when you have been vocally visited by the ministers of Jesus.

Such worshippers (as our Lord said to the woman of *Samaria*) the heavenly father seeketh to worship him; and those whom God finds under such exercise, such find him to be unto them all in all; he is unto them wisdom, righteousness, justification, sanctification, and redemption.

Oh! dear souls, look to him (who is invisible to the outward eye) who is God over all, and is blessed for ever; and may you, if this comes to you, feel the divine life and spirit of Christ, in the reading of this little epistle of brotherly love.

Live in love, for God is love, and all those who dwell in divine love, they dwell in God; wherefore love one another, that thereby you may be known to be Christ's disciples: *For, says he, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another, or if ye love one another; as one of the evangelists hath it.*

And keep low in mind, and humble in spirit; for the humble God will teach of his ways, and the meek he will guide in judgment, and those whom he teaches, are taught the mysteries of his kingdom, which mysteries he teaches to spiritual babes and sucklings (glory to his holy name!) he often hides those holy mysteries from the wise and prudent, and reveals them to such men, women, and children, as are little in their own eyes, and despised by the wise in natural wisdom, or the wisdom of this vain world.

Oh!

Oh! mind your heavenly guide, dear friends, let me entreat you; for he leads out of all sin, and out of all vanity and evil, of what kind soever; and as our Saviour saith, *into all truth*. When Christ comes by his grace and spirit into the heart, then he opens the soul, and enlightens the understanding, even in our common conversation; and much more (at times) in our solemn meetings, when we meet together to worship and serve him; so that 'tis good to wait upon the Lord, and to seek him with the whole heart.

Dear friends, though my heart is full of love and good-will to you at this time, as at many others also, I must now conclude, and commit you into the holy arms of him, who is all divine love, begging the God of love and peace to keep you, and preserve you to his heavenly kingdom; to whom be all glory, and praise, might, majesty, and divine dominion, through his dear Son, and the holy Spirit, for evermore.

T. C.

CHRIST'S kingdom exalted: being a short Essay, in order to promote *truth* and *righteousness* in the earth, and to discourage *unholiness*, *ungodliness*, and *unbelief*.

P R E F A C E.

Christian reader,

IN order to promote and exalt the kingdom of the dear Son of God (according to the gift and measure of grace received) I was concerned to write the following tract at sea; and considering the evil tendency of the belief and principle which hath overspread a great part of the professors of Christianity, that we cannot be free from sin in this life; and that it is contrary to the doctrine of the holy scriptures of both the new and old testament; I could not be easy in my mind, without opposing such a dangerous

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text: for if we believe that we must always sin, this being a sinful faith, "according to our faith, so it will be unto us;" and if we die in our sins, Christ hath told us, "where he is gone, we cannot come." And holy record informs us, "that no unclean thing can enter God's kingdom."

I have also, for the further satisfaction of the true christian believer, collected the following tracts of holy scripture, which maintain the doctrine of holiness and perfection; and directly oppose that evil principle, and that doctrine, that we can never be free from sin in this life.

Walk before me, and be thou perfect, *Gen. xvii. 1.*

Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy, *Lev. xix. 2. xx. 7. xi. 44, 45.*

And ye shall be holy men unto me, *Exod. xxii. 31.*

Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, *Gen. vi. 9.*

Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord, *Heb. xii. 10, 14.*

We should be holy and without blame before him, in love, *Eph. i. 4.*

To present you holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable, in his sight, *Col. i. 22.*

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, *1 Cor. iii. 17.*

So be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy, *1 Pet. i. 15, 16.*

What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, *2 Pet. iii. 11.*

Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God, *Deut. xviii. 13.*

The Lord said, Job was perfect and upright, *Job i. 1, 8.*

Be ye therefore perfect, the words of Christ, *Mat. v. 48.*

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, *John xvii. 23.*

Howbeit he spake wisdom among them that are perfect, *1 Cor. ii. 6.*

Finally Brethren, be perfect, be of one mind, *2 Cor. xiii. 11.*

That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: that ye may stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God, *Col. i. 28. iv. 12.*

Now the God of peace, &c. make you perfect in every good work, *Heb. xiii. 20, 21.*

That ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, *James i. 4.*

Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, *2 Cor. vii. 1.*

Unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, *Eph. iv. 12, 13.*

This we wish, even your perfection, *2 Cor. xiii. 9.*

Let us go on to perfection, *Heb. vi. 1.*

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good, *Rom. xii. 21.*

Ye have overcome the wicked one; *this is twice repeated in one chapter, 1 John ii. 13, 14.*

Ye are of God, and have overcome, *1 John iv. 4.*

Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world, &c. *1 John v. 4, 5.*

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life: *Rev. ii. 7.*

He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death, *verse 11.*

To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, *verse 17.*

To him that overcometh, will I give power over the nations, *verse 26.*

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, *Rev. iii. 5.*

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Vol. II.

Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, *verse 12.*

To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, *verse 21.*

He that overcometh shall inherit all things, *Rev. xii. 7.*

Consider then, courteous reader, I pray thee: what was all this language of the spirit, all these words of God, and all these commands, exhortations, and glorious promises for? What is the end and tendency of them?

If the Almighty commands things that cannot be done, what will that make of him? If his servants labour and exhort us to things not to be done, where will those absurdities land? Surely it must center in the mouth of the unprofitable servant, and such as charge God foolishly. And are all those fine and glorious promises made to put us on to fight against sin and satan, without a possibility of overcoming? God forbid; and may the christian reader, forbid also, that thou shouldst believe such a gross and palpable mistake and error.

Oh! that the Almighty Lord may send forth more and more his holy light and truth, and that thereby he might lead and guide the inhabitants of the earth; so that they might not give up the cause of Christ, but manfully resist, even to death, that at last they might have a crown of life.

T. C.

CHRIST's kingdom exalted, &c.

IN the christian world 'tis too generally believed, that people on this side the grave cannot be free from sin; which principle, or belief, is a great let and hindrance to the glorious work of reformation, and mightily obstructs people in their way to eternal glory, and tends to uphold the kingdom of satan, which every good christian (with saint Paul) should be for pulling down; and, in order

to this, should make use of the weapons that he did, that is, the *armour of light*; which weapons were, and are, *the preparation of the gospel of peace, the girdle of truth, helmet of salvation, breast-plate of righteousness, shield of faith, and sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.* This is indeed a holy war, to war against sin and satan; and also heavenly armour, the *armour of light*; and this holy apostle was a valiant soldier, who was also victorious in this war: Oh who would but lift themselves under Christ's banner, and fight this fight of faith with courage, and true christian valour! the apostle says, "that the weapons of this warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strong holds, of sin and satan." Oh! down with those strong holds, down with them, let every lover of Jesus Christ say, and pray, that the kingdom of God, and his Christ, may be exalted over all, for ever. Sin is the chief support of satan's kingdom, which Christ came to destroy and put an end to, and to bring in righteousness, actual righteousness; as well as imputative; he came to save his people from their sins, not only by imputation, but by holy action also; as his holy doctrine in his excellent sermon on the mount, and his many other divine expressions, do plainly and abundantly manifest. Now considering the great evil of this dangerous principle, I have been deeply affected on account of poor mankind, to whose utter ruin and eternal destruction it most certainly tends. If we were to reason as men and rational beings, with what spirit and courage should we undertake any business, journey, or concern, if before-hand we were grounded in a belief that we could not perform our undertaking? Or what nation or people in the world would have any courage to engage their common enemies, if at the same time they did believe they should never overcome them, would not this abundantly dispirit

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and discourage them in their engagement, let any rational soul judge? Oh! this belief of sinning to the end of our days, is a mighty engine of satan in order to support his kingdom, and a wonderful prop to uphold it. Pray what signifies all the preaching and writing in the world against sin, though never so elegantly or scholastically wrote or delivered by the greatest of orators or ministers, if, at the same time, this doctrine be upheld and maintained in pulpits, prints, and otherwise, &c. and received and believ'd by the people? Let truth and right reason in this matter bear rule and be judge, and the cause will be determined against the kingdom of sin and satan: but the "kingdom of Christ is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall never be an end." This is a word of encouragement to the followers of Christ to be faithful to the commands of Christ.

Though the devil is a great king, and a mighty prince; though he is king over all the children of pride and disobedience, and prince of the power of the air; yet "the Lamb and his followers will have the victory" over sin and him, altho' sometimes it may fare with them as with their Lord, who obtained it through sufferings; and let it be remembered by them, *that they shall in the end reign with him*; also, *Fear not, little flock, says Christ, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom*; by which words, when received in faith, the soul is inspired with courage, and holy boldness, to resist the tempter; though we may have the disadvantage of being but few, and satan and his followers many, who support his kingdom, with this sinful principle and doctrine above-mentioned. One great and wily way which he useth to uphold his kingdom, is to wrest and abuse the holy scriptures, and strain them to his evil purposes, as he served our Lord the captain of our salvation, as will be shewn hereafter: and in-

deed when he makes use of any of the words of God, it is for an evil end, and that end must needs be wicked, which is to keep the people in sin, or to create a belief that we cannot live without it in this world; the which, if he can obtain, and cause people to believe, he knows he hath a great advantage over them: for how should clay, or dust and ashes, overcome sin, who confess they are, and believe they always shall be sinners? Wherefore let us examine and see what use he makes of those scriptures, which he brings to support people in sin, and by which he makes them believe they can never live without it; some of which are as followeth, *viz.* First, beginning with that saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Matt. xix. 17.* to the young man that asked him, *What good thing he should do to inherit eternal life, calling him good Master;* our Saviour replies, *Why callest thou me good, there is none that is good, but one, that is God.* The young man thought he was speaking to a mortal man; and it seems to have been the will of Christ by this remark, both to caution his disciples against the use of vain compliments, and to let them know that this young man had not true faith in him, as he was the Son of God: and it is most certainly true, that in fulness and perfection, there is no man good, compared with God; but comparing men with men, there are good men, women and children, who fear God, and do truly love Christ, and there have been a few such in all ages, and will be some such, to the end of the world. To construe Christ's words otherwise, would be to abuse the holy scriptures, which Satan makes a common practice of doing.

2dly, Another is that expression of *Solomon*, in the 8th chap. of *1 Kings* ver. 46. *There is no man that sinneth not.* The learned say, this should be interpreted, "and who may not sin." But though it may truly be said of men in one part of their lives or other, or in the state of man in the fall, or degenera-

tion (in which that sinner's birth, the epistle, and of God, doth and be cannot seed which which make kingdom of he knows and therefore destroy even fians can world.

3dly, *Prov.* have made words of the Almighty heart, and which praise the work even that He can make the work done it, the self clean. might with is supposed and then w sian and clean or p

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tion (in which state of unconversion) there is no man that sinneth not : yet in the regeneration or new birth, the apostle *John* in the 3d chapter of his first epistle, and 9th verse, saith, that *Whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* It is this seed which would beget this new and living birth, which makes us children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven, which satan would destroy ; for he knows he shall have an enemy of every such soul, and therefore it is the devil's interest and endeavour to destroy every such birth and such belief, that christians can possibly attain to live without sin in the world.

3dly, *Prov.* 20th chap. 9th verse, *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin,* the words of *Solomon*, the son of *David*, who prayed to the Almighty in his psalms: *Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right, or pure spirit within me ;* which prayer was no doubt answered : but this is the work of God, and to him all things are possible, even that which looks impossible to men ; for, *He can make a heart more pure than gold.* So it being the work of God, no man can say, that he hath done it, that he hath purified himself, or made himself clean. Can the Almighty make a man pure ? It might with much truth be answered he can ; and it is supposed no good Christian can or will deny it : and then what will become of that absurd antichristian and antisciptural tenet, that we cannot be clean or pure from sin, in this world ?

It may be said, if there are any who live without sin, they are but very few (a sorrowful truth indeed !) but is it not every one's interest to strive to be one of those few, as it is also his indispensable duty ? Our Lord also saith, that *the way to his kingdom is strait and narrow, and that there are but few that find it.* Must we therefore give up the cause, and not seek
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the kingdom, and because of the difficulty of Christ's cross here in this world, must we go in the broad way, where there is much room and company. May every true christian say, the Lord forbid (I humbly pray) and not only say, but do that which is right in the sight of God.

4thly, The next is an expression of Solomon's, Ecclesiastes, chapter 7th, verse 20. *There is not a just man upon the earth that doth good and sinneth not.* This should be interpreted as the former, and may not sin: he speaketh of a man in the state of his vanity and sin, before a reformation; for divine wisdom, and the fear of the Lord (which he taught) keeps the heart clean, and preserves from the snares of sin, death, and the devil: so that this state of sin that he here speaks of, must be before man attains to the wisdom of God, and before he comes truly to live in his fear. Therefore he must certainly do good, who lives in the fear of God, "which (as the same Solomon says) is the beginning of wisdom; and to depart from iniquity, is a good understanding." So that he shews man his state of vanity, and also his state of sin, as above, and teacheth people how to avoid it, by fearing the Lord, and walking in the counsel of wisdom (*i. e.*) Christ's counsel, who is the wisdom of God to salvation. That all men are sinners, before the work of conversion, is true, and that the devil designs to keep them there to their lives end, is as true; and no likelier way can he do it, than by keeping them in a belief that they must live in sin, and cannot live without it whilst they live in this world; and when they come to die, then fear surprises the hypocrite, and terror takes hold of the ungodly: and many times when too late, they see the snares which the devil and sin hath brought them into. Oh! what pity it is, that this veil of darkness is not done away, in time of youth and strength, and health, when the bones are full of

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narrow, and the veins are full of blood! but the design of satan is to lead people on in this pernicious principle till death, and then before they are aware, they may drop into eternal woe and misery, where the wicked and ungodly must be turned, with all them that forget God: for into heaven, where Christ is, "if we die in our sins, we (as Christ said) cannot come, *John viii. 21.*"

5thly, The apostle *John*, in his first epistle, chapter i. verse 8, 9, and 10, writes thus, *If we say we have had (as it may be turned) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us;* which answers to the 8th verse, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.* The 9th verse fully lets us into the meaning of the 8th verse (*i. e.*) *if we confess our sins, for all ought to confess, and also to forsake their sins, "all having sinned, and being by nature children of wrath;" otherwise we have no assurance of mercy from the holy scriptures: then he (i. e.) the Almighty, "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* And pray what sin is there, when we are cleansed from all unrighteousness? And then in the 10th verse he says, *If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar.* There is no doubt but that we have sinned, which is what the apostle plainly points at in the 8th verse. And if any man sins (when he repents and forsakes) *we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous: and God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.* But then we must repent and forsake, if we expect to find mercy; though we have sin, or have had sin, we must not always have it, for if we have it always, we will be unto us, according to the words of God and Christ. Thus we see how satan is put to his

shifts to support his sinful kingdom, and how he abuses the holy scriptures, when he makes use of them, as will be further made manifest in what follows, as the same apostle doth plainly demonstrate in his third chapter of the above epistle, verse 7, 8, 9, and 10. saying, *Let no man (nor the devil neither, say I) deceive you: he that doth righteousness, is righteous: he that committeth sin, is of the devil.* This is plain and naked truth, let who will like or dislike it. Further, in the 9th and 10th verses, he again repeats to the same purpose, saying, *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God.* (Ergo, Then he must be of the devil, while he is in unrighteousness.)

There are divers other places in the holy scriptures, which he abuseth in like manner, and which he and his children wrest to uphold him and his kingdom of sin and unrighteousness, and themselves therein: so by and through the grace of God, we may see his wiles and delusions, and the rottenness of his cause, as also the unsafe and dangerous foundation of his building, through endeavouring unduly to support the same, by that which was always designed to destroy him and his kingdom (*i. e.*) the holy scriptures. May all men judge in this matter, whether that spirit which would bring, pick, and cull out a few verses, and sometimes a few words out of a verse, in order to make them speak contrary to the whole scope and tenor, or tendency of the holy scriptures, and to plant a belief that we shall never overcome sin and unrighteousness in this world; tho' they (*i. e.*) the holy scriptures all along exhort, and teach us to avoid sin and unrighteousness, and live a holy righteous life in this present world; I say, may all mortals judge whether such a spirit can be of God, or whether it be not of, and from the father of lies? Wherefore, if it be plainly proved,

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that there have been those who have overcome sin and satan, and that Christ repeatedly and his holy apostles (he in them, and they in him) exhorted to fight against sin and the devil, who is the author of all sin; and Christ faithfully promising most sweet and gracious rewards to those who shall overcome, in order to encourage the spiritual warrior to a faithful perseverance, and resisting of sin and satan; then it is hoped that satan will be wounded, his kingdom shaken, and this evil destructive principle, in some measure laid waste in some poor soul or souls, into whose hands these may come.

1st, Then, Beginning with the great apostle of the Gentiles (a notable soldier in the Lamb's spiritual war) I have, says he, *fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all those that love his appearing,* 2 Tim. iv. 7. 8. And if this be not encouragement, what is? He also saith, *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ,* 1 Cor. xi. 1. Here is example, exhortation, and encouragement, with experience.

2dly, Another of the apostles, John, in his first epistle, chap. ii. verse 13th, is positive, that those young men he writes to, had already overcome the wicked one. *I write unto you, says he, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.* And in the 14th verse, he repeats it again, as though he would doubly and deeply imprint it in their minds, *I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* Here were young men, who were truly valiant and noble, to wage war with the wicked one. If it was possible for them, why is it not possible for us also? Oh! that our young men of this generation, would take those young men for
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their examples, to make war with this wicked one, and truly endeavour to pull down his kingdom. It is worth our notice, that those young men had the word of God abiding in them; by this sword of the spirit they overcame, by it they were cleansed, by taking heed to walk according to its direction, as it is written, *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his ways? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word, Psal. cxix. 6.* The great reason why young men are overcome, instead of overcoming, is their heedlessness to and of the word; for notwithstanding their bones may be full of marrow, and their veins full of blood, and nature strong, having many temptations to sin and evil; yet, by taking heed to the word, they might be reformed; and through the immediate power and strength thereof, may overcome the wicked one. So here were young men who actually overcame sin and satan, that this holy servant of Jesus wrote to, by way of encouragement. Is the arm of the Lord shortened? Surely no. It is true, mortals are short in their duty, but not the Almighty in his holy arm of power, nor his dear Son, in his unparalleld love, and most pure doctrine, whose doctrine shall be set down, as the spirit indited it to the seven churches in Asia. First, to the church of *Ephesus*. Secondly, to the church of *Smyrna*. Thirdly, to the church of *Pergamus*. Fourthly, to the church of *Thyatira*. Fifthly, to the church of *Sardis*. Sixthly, to the church of *Philadelphia*. Seventhly, to the church of *Laodicea*.

First, To the church of *Ephesus*, Rev. ii. 7. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches, to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* Hear is an excellent promise and blessed encouragement to such as believe, and are faithful, and are desirous to fight in the Lamb's war against sin and satan: The same apostle gives a description of this tree of life, in the above said book; "That it bears

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twelve manner of fruits, and bears its fruits every month, and its leaves are for the healing of the nations;" which mystically points at Christ, who is faithful in his precious promises and doctrine, and has that virtue in him, that, through faith, will heal the nations of their wounds which sin has given them. Those who continually eat at the tree of Life, shall live for ever; but a flaming sword will turn every way, to keep the unbelieving sinners from it: none in a state of sin and disobedience can come to enjoy the paradise of God. The above is an excellent promise to all those who overcome sin, and the devil, who is the author of it.

Secondly, To the church of Smyrna, Rev. ii. 11. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches, he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death: Which is that eternal death which is in hell, or that lake of fire which burns for ever, where the worm never dieth, and the fire never goeth out. This holy warfare is certainly a fighting for life, against eternal death and hell; which is of much greater consequence than natural life and death. Oh! fight for your lives against sin and Satan, against pride and vanity, and all manner of wickedness; put on the whole armour of light; look unto God, through Christ the victorious Lamb, that you may be saved from the eternal lake of fire, and not be hurt of the second death, Oh! may we know a dying daily to sin, to the world, the flesh, and the devil, that we may live unto God, through faith in his dear Son Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, To the church of Pergamus, Rev. ii. 17. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches, to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. Here are four excellent promises to him that overcometh, the

Lord opens his treasury of Life, and of wisdom, in order to invite souls, to the mighty Battle of the Lamb, who is not like the princes of this world, who sometimes promise great things to their soldiers or followers, and do not perform; but God's promises are all yea, and amen for ever.

The first promise is, *to eat of the hidden manna*: the children of *Israel* eat manna (outwardly) as it is written, in the wilderness, and are dead; but those who eat of this hidden manna, this angels-food, and who are hid with God in Christ, these shall never die (*i. e.* spiritually) for this hidden manna is the flesh and blood of the Son of God, who said, *Except ye eat of my flesh, and drink of my blood, ye have no life in you*, John vi. 31, 49, 50, 51, &c.

Second promise is, *to have a white stone*; this stone is Christ, who is the chief corner stone of God's building or church, the *New Jerusalem*, which the wise letter-learned master-builders set at nought; but he is the head of the saints building or corner, and a holy precious stone, the elect or chosen of God, the gift of God, to all those who truly believe, and overcome sin, as he did; and as it is written, *If he give us his Son, shall he not with his Son give us all things?* There is abundance of talk and writing about the philosopher's stone; but this *white stone* (which is the gift of God to those who overcome sin and satan) is the true philosopher's stone. (A philosopher is a lover of wisdom, and Christ is the wisdom of God) this stone will certainly do miracles for them that have it, through the virtue of its power, it will procure joy in tribulation, patience in afflictions, and health in sickness, riches in poverty, strength in weakness, liberty in bonds, and to sum up all (which indeed is a great sum) *life in death*.

Third promise, *and in the stone a new name*: how many gay sparks and beans would do abundance to gain honour or a name among men? Nothing is

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dear to them in this world, neither their estates, nor the nearest relation they have in the world, so that they may gain a name here below; no, not even their own lives; but, oh! did mortals know the virtue of this name, and were they in love with it, then the world, and all its fading beauty and vanity, would be nothing to them in comparison of this name, which is better than the names of sons of worldly glory, and maids or daughters of honour; for those outward names are fading, viz. to-day a king, a prince, a duke, an earl, a lord, a knight, (and has been, and may be again) to-morrow on the scaffold: but this name which the King of kings giveth to those who overcome sin and satan, is a name which will outlast time, and will endure to eternity.

Fourth promise is, "That it should be secret (only to the world) but surely known to him that hath it." Great men, when their acts and titles of honour are blazoned abroad in the world, they have many enemies many ways, who envy them; and yet some are so vain as to love grandeur and popularity, notwithstanding; but he that hath a name that Christ gives, so long as he is sensible of it in himself, he is therewith satisfied.

Now as this is the portion (and more which is hereafter mentioned) of those who overcome the wicked one, then, on the contrary, what will become of those who live and delight in sin, and are daily overcome with it? For the holy scriptures are positive, that *the wicked, with all those that forget God, shall be turned into hell.* This is the determinate will of God: and that we may take the more notice of it, to observe and do his will, he hath caused it to be written down in the language of the holy spirit, in the holy scriptures of truth, which are of no private interpretation; but naked and open to mean capacities. The holy scriptures are not to be interpreted

puted to the private interest of any particular person or set of persons only; but are a general benefit unto all the faithful believers and followers of Christ, through the whole world.

Fourthly, To the church at *Thyatira*, *Rev. ii. 26.* to the end; *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him I will give power over the nations, and I will give him the morning-star.* He that *hath* an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches. The spirit still continues promising his gracious privileges upon condition of evercoming: wherefore, if it had been impossible to have overcome sin and satan, then all these promises would have been in vain, and the holy scriptures deceiving, which would be to make Christ and the apostles deceivers; but Christ, his apostles, and the holy scriptures, are true, and every one that contradicts God, is a liar.

Let it be observed, that there must be a keeping the word to the end also; for divers have run well for a time, and overcome many sins, through the help and goodness of God, and yet afterwards have run into sin again, whereby they have grieved the good spirit of God, by which they should have been sealed to the day of redemption, and so the Lord hath taken his good spirit and gift of light, and grace from them, and left them to themselves, and their own hearts lusts; but such as hold out in well-doing to the end, the same shall be saved, and *those shall have power over the nations*; the laws of men, or powers of the earth or hell, cannot hurt them; but they will be as kings and priests unto God, ruling over their own spirits; such an one is greater than one that ruleth a city, and cannot govern himself. Another excellent gift is promised here to the victorious christian warrior, *viz. I will give him the morning-star*: 'tis indeed a very comfortable gift, to behold the morning-star, after a long tedious, stormy night, earnestly waiting for the morning: oh! 'tis wonderful pleasant. This

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morning-star the writer of these lines hath witnessed, both as to his natural and spiritual travels; but especially to his inward state and condition as a christian. Those that have a true sight and sense of this divine star, are made to rejoice; for then they do infallibly know, that the day of the most High is at hand, and that his kingdom draws near unto them. Amen, Holy Lord Jesus!

As the day-star is a fore-runner of the natural day, so is the heavenly morning star a fore-runner of the day of the most High to the soul.

Fifthly, To the church of Sardis, Rev. iii. 5. He that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; but I will confess him before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches. These promises of God, through his spirit, and through his servant, to the church of Sardis, is, "That those who overcome shall be clothed in white raiment;" and he says in the 4th ver. of the same chapter, "That that church had a few in her who had not defiled their garments, should walk with him in white, for (saith he) they are worthy." So that there were a few undefiled ones, who had overcome; although others were blameable, whom the spirit reproved sharply; but also, as above, promised that those who overcame should be clothed in white raiment; which white raiment is that clean linnen, called *the righteousness of the saints*, or elsewhere, *the wedding garment*, and *the garment unspotted of the world*, without having which, we may expect to be asked, how we dare to presume to approach the holy presence of a just and righteous God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with allowance or approbation, as it is written, *Friend, how comest thou hither not having on the wedding garment?* And by the promise to the church, that those who overcame, "their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life." It plainly appears, that

that those who fight the lamb's battle, and overcome sin and satan, their names are upon record in heaven, and written in the Lamb's book of life: it also appears, that we may have done well or valiantly in some things, yet if we suffer ourselves to be overcome of sin, there is danger, though our names are in, we may have them blotted out of the book of life.

Third promise is very excellent and glorious, viz. *But I will confess him before my Father, and before his angels.* Oh! wonderful honour! to have Christ confess that we are his, and belong to him, and have been men of courage in this holy war, and overcome the enemy, and been victorious in this fight of faith; to confess us there before God and his angels, must needs be unspeakable honour done us before the armies in heaven. He expressed again his repeated advice to those who have ears, saying, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches:* which is much wanting among men, and also a believing heart: I query, is not God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost, stronger than the world, the flesh, and the devil? But is not this belief of it not being possible to overcome sin, and saying, that we can't do it while we are here in this world; as much as to believe and say, that satan and nature is stronger than God and Grace?

Sixthly, To the church at Philadelphia, the spirit saith, *Rev. iii. 12, 13. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, &c.* He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches. Here is promise upon promise, all to persuade, excite, and invite people to fight the fight of faith, believing they shall obtain the victory, and to destroy the principle of unbelief: the overcomer, through grace, is to be made a pillar in the temple of God; that is one of his church, who helps to support

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support the credit of it, through a true christian reputation in his conversation. Such an one is a pillar in the church-militant here on earth, and will if he is faithful to the end, be also of the church triumphant in heaven; "and he will not go out any more, but will abide in, and with Christ forever." Here are gospel promises and privileges, happy are they who through faith attain thereto: how much have christians need to be concern'd before God, for the excellent gift of faith, since "without faith it is impossible to please God." And as our Saviour saith, *If ye had faith but as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say to this mountain, be removed, and cast into the sea, and it should be so.* Now though sin indeed is grown to a very great mountain, in this age and generation, yet through true faith it is removed, according to the doctrine of Christ (blessed be his holy name.) Upon those overcomers, the Lord hath also promised as above, to "write upon them the name of God, and the name of the city of God, which is new *Jerusalem*, which cometh down from heaven, which is the mother of all saints, *Gal. iv. 26.*" Here is a train of glorious expressions, and mighty promises enough to inspire the tender soul with strong desires after God and Christ, and his kingdom. My heart is deeply affected at this time, in the sense of the love of our heavenly Father; and my spirit is greatly concern'd for the welfare of the children of men, my fellow mortals. Oh! that they might believe, and that believing they might have life, through the name of Christ. It is observable, that to overcome, is the condition of obtaining all these great and glorious promises; and overcoming is repeated seven times, once to every church. And to say after all those glorious and fair promises, that sin and Satan cannot be overcome, is not the consequence of such saying or belief, to make Christ a deceiver? Which is absurd and antichristian doctrine.

Seventhly, To the church of Laodicea, Rev. iii. 21, 22. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches.* What greater promise could Christ make to his church than this, to take her into his throne, and into his Father's kingdom, into his bosom of love? This is wonderful kind indeed. But then, oh! christian, the condition is to overcome, as Christ overcame.

Now since it may be beneficial to christians to understand, and to consider duly, this great fight or battle, and how this great conqueror overcame; and because we are to follow him, and to take him for our example, let us have a description of it, it being the greatest encounter or battle, that ever was in the world, between the Prince of life, and the king of the bottomless pit. The history of which, is worth the reading of the greatest prince or monarch on earth, since, they must leave this low world, and lay down all their crowns when death calls them to fight this battle, and to follow this Monarch, who hath all divine power in heaven and earth, and to take his direction, is every man's duty and interest, both noble and ignoble. The holy evangelists, *Matthew* and *Luke*, give us an account of this great fight, in the 4th chapter of *Matthew*, and 4th chapter of *Luke*, and agree in the most weighty matters, though they did not exactly word it alike, yet the substance is the same, and the temptation, conflict or battle, all one. 1st, Satan bids Christ (as *Matthew* and *Luke* has it) "command the stones, or stone to be made bread. 2dly, To cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. 3dly, To worship the devil, or fall down to him." *Matt.* chap. 4th, 1st verse to the 11th. *Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was*

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same manner he tempts us poor mortals, by laying his snares, and baiting his hook, according to the nature and propensity of the person he is engaged withal: if a man, woman, or child, be addicted to passion, pride, swearing, lying, drunkenness, taking the sacred name in vain, idle or vain discourses to steal away our precious time: let the sin be what it will, that which we are most certainly addicted to, there will he lay his temptations, for he preys upon our weakness, and plies the weakest part in us most; for which reason, we have need to keep a strict watch; as Christ advised to "watch and pray continually, lest ye should enter into temptation;" for it is no sin to be tempted, but the sin is to entertain, and enter into temptation; if we overcome, as Christ did, it is an honour to be tempted, and a secret joy springs in the soul, in a sense of its victory, in sore conflicts between the enemy and the soul, the Lord manifesting his divine grace for our assistance and help. Here we can take the advice of the apostle, when he says, *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*; and also overcome them as Christ did by resistance.

If it be objected, tho' Christ overcame, yet I'm a poor sinful creature, and have no power; but he had and hath all power, both in heaven and earth, committed into his hands, so that he might well overcome him. It is well if thou see'st thou has no power, and if thou see'st that Christ hath wonderful power; then since we have no power of ourselves, we must by prayer and humble supplication, apply to him for it, in time of need; believing, that he who hath made so many encouraging promises as are before recited, hath also grace, and will give both grace and glory to those who diligently seek him: else why did he make so many excellent promises to the spiritual warriors? This is worthy of the notice of all, that satan is a conquered and limited

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ed enemy and adversary. 'Tis a sweet portion of gospel tidings, and good news, that the devil cannot force any one whether he will or no into sin; for if he could, no flesh could be saved. As for instance, if a man, woman, or child, were tempted by satan, to tell a lie, he cannot force thee to it against thy will; so that there must be a cowardly giving way, and falling from the Lamb's standard, or ensign, and going over to satan, if man is overcome of sin and wickedness: for if we stand stiffly against him, although we be weak in ourselves, our great Master who seeth us in secret, if we cry to him for help, will come to our assistance, he whom satan could never conquer; therefore it is safe for all professing the name of Jesus Christ to keep near unto him, through faith in his name and power, which ever was, is, and will be, a strong tower to those who fly thereunto for safety. Christ did not do as the devil tempted him, or persuaded him to do; but he withstands the temptation with this reply, *It is written, thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*: for there is life in every word of God. Thus our Lord overcame him; for satan can't resist, so as to make void, or lay waste the words of God in the holy scriptures of truth, when they are brought into our minds by his spirit to uphold and promote the kingdom of God and Christ, and to destroy the kingdom of sin and satan; though he (*i. e.* the devil) makes use of those sacred writings, often wresting them, and bringing them for evil uses, and wrong purposes, as most certainly he doth, when he alledgeth from them, that people can't live otherwise than in sin.

"Then (as *Matthew* has it) he had our Lord to the pinnacle of the temple, and bid him cast himself down; for, says satan, it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Though he was once over-

overcome, yet he has the boldness to tempt yet again: as Christ overcame him by his power, making use of the holy scriptures, he now tries what he can do with the scriptures: he tempts Christ with them, that he might tempt his Father; and so he tempts poor mortals by the scripture to keep them in sin, by making a wrong use of them, and misapplying them; and if he can hold them in sin, he knows 'tis the ready way to cause the Almighty to be angry with them; and if they hold out in it to the end, to turn them at last into hell, where the wicked must be turned. And he begins his temptations with an, *If thou be the Son of God, tho' he knew very well that he was the Son of God; yet like some of his evil seed, or seed of evil-doers, tempted him to shew a sign; but our Lord did not gratify either him or them, but rebuked them both, as they well deserved; and so by denial and resistance he overcame, and we also must the same way.* After this our Lord makes a true and right use of the scriptures, saying, *It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* And truly those who read the holy scriptures, and know how much they speak against sin, and for righteousness, and who yet notwithstanding live in sin and ungodliness, and plead for it even from these sacred writings, which were wrote on purpose to destroy sin, should seriously consider, whether they are not guilty of tempting of God, which Christ says it is written thou shalt not do. Oh! that people would turn away from sin and Satan, and break off from their sins by repentance, and their iniquities by amendment of life, which is the way to have the days of their tranquility lengthened out in this world, and to be happy in that which is without end to come; for, as it is written, *The wicked do not live out half their days;* which according to my observation, is a true general rule. How many have been taken off in their prime and strength, and in the flower of their years, who might, according

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to the course of nature, have lived many years, had they been sober and temperate, and lived in the fear of God? If it be asked, do not pious young people die also? Yes, but not so frequently as intemperate ones; I have had occasion to observe it in divers parts of the world; and besides, if pious young people leave this world, their exchange is glorious; whereas the wicked and ungodly make a sad and bitter exchange; and since life is so uncertain, and death so sure and certain to all, even to male and female, what care and fear ought there to be on all, of offending so merciful a God, and so sweet a Saviour, who overcame, to shew us the way to overcome also; and died for sin, that we might die to the world, and the sinful part of it, and live to him, exhorting of us to overcome as he also did, and then promiseth to take us for his companions with himself, and his Father, in his heavenly kingdom.

Satan repeats his temptation again a third time; for he is an unwearied enemy, and will tempt poor mortals over and over, many times; but he is to be resisted as often as he tempts, if we will follow the counsel and example of Christ; and this was his last temptation for that conflict, as one of the evangelists observes, "he takes him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of it. A temptation which takes with abundance of souls; the glory, riches, and greatness of this world, ruins many, they having it, and being swell'd with pride therein; some are destroying themselves to get it, and cannot attain to it; and many would endeavour to create a belief of themselves that they are greater, richer, and more noble, than they really are; which is a temptation of the evil one; for we ought to think meanly of ourselves; and if we will follow Christ's example, make ourselves of no reputation; and when satan would tempt us to be proud, or high of mind, we then
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should resist, as Christ did, who said to the devil in this temptation, *Get thee behind me satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* If this holy rule was followed, as Christ instituted it, then we should overcome sin, and satan: Christ's institution is, *That the hour cometh, and now is, that those that worship the father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* It is too much worship or homage to fall down to or worship satan; but the duty of every christian is to worship the Lord God of heaven and earth, for he it is whom we should only (*i. e.*) chiefly and mainly serve and worship, and that not only in a formal way, but with hearts truly devoted to do his will; we are to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, into which the devil can never come; tho' he may get into the form of it, he can't overcome us, where the power of Christ is liv'd in; for by the power of God, which dwells in Christ, who overcame, by the same power, christians do and should overcome: so the devil was forced to fly when Christ resisted him, and so he will when christians resist him in Christ: and when Christ had overcome, then the angels came and ministred unto him; likewise the guardian angel of God's holy presence will administer sweet comfort and pleasure to every true soul, who stand truly for the cause of God and Christ against sin and satan, sincerely endeavouring to pull down satan's kingdom, or sin which upholds it, and faithfully desires to exalt the kingdom of God and his dear Son. Now he or she that believes, and overcomes (for without belief, 'tis impossible to overcome) those are truly intitled to all the abovesaid precious promises, and privileges, otherwise the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and against all those who hold the truth in self righteousness, or unrighteousness. Again, *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that*

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that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God, Rom. ii. 9, 10, 11. Here the ways of God are equal, but the ways of man and satan are unequal; sin, iniquity, and transgression are of the devil, and of man in the fall; but righteousness, holiness, and truth, are of God, to which man is restored, through regeneration and reformation. Glory over all be given to God and the Lamb for ever. Amen.

A. D. 1719.

T. C.

Some considerations on the call, work, and wages of ministers of CHRIST.

SOMETHING hath been on my mind to write concerning the work of the ministry of the gospel of Christ, with a design of instruction to ministers in particular, and the benefit of others in general.

It is an unspeakable benefit to mankind, to be favoured with a powerful, living ministry, which edifies the church of God, and builds up the true believers in the most holy faith (according to the word of God) in Christ Jesus, who is the great Minister of the true tabernacle and sanctuary, which God hath pitched, and not man; and this great Minister sent forth his ministers and servants saying, *I send you forth as sheep among wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*, Matt. x. 16. He did not send them forth as lords over his heritage, nor as persecuting priests, or mercenary hirelings, but said to them, *Freely you have received, freely give*: here is no compulsion nor force enjoin'd by Christ; but it is plain, from his own doctrine and example, that his ministry is a free ministry, blessed be his holy name and truth for ever: nor do we read or understand

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of any alteration thereof by Christ : indeed the ministers of antichrist have made an alteration (contrary to this doctrine of his) in their ministry ; but the holy apostles, who after Christ were the first planters of christianity in the earth, when it shone in its primitive beauty and glory, they followed the counsel of their Lord and Master, and ministred freely : then was the power of Christ's ministry and gospel through his ministers and servants great, and the glory and beauty thereof ravishing to pious souls. Oh ! may every true minister, and every sensible soul, bow before the most High, and bless the holy name of him that lives and reigns for ever, for this unspeakable gift of Christ's holy ministry, which always was, now is, and ever will be, convincing and converting unto souls, who are not slow of heart to believe in God, and in his dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our great High Priest, and the bishop of souls ; he saw the need that his church had of his ministry, and therefore he established it in his church, and among his followers, to the end of time.

Now, in order to this great and wonderful work, he told his disciples (when he was going into his glory and kingdom of his Father) *That he would pray to the Father, and he would send them another Comforter, the spirit of truth, and that he should abide with them for ever.* And he also told them, *That when he is come, he shall first reprove or convince the world of sin, because they believe not in me,* John xiv. 17. xvi. 7, 11. For if they believed truly in Christ, they would love his spiritual appearance ; but O how many are there in the world, who slight this high favour, and grace of God and Christ, calling this wonderful gift and grace, the light of nature ; whereas Christ says it is the holy Ghost ; and the apostle Paul says, " It is God's grace, that teaches us to deny ungodliness, and hath appeared unto all men."

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Oh that the children of men might love that which appears to them, and convinceth them of their sins; and surely it is a great sin not to believe in the spirit and light of Christ: such unbelieving souls are in darkness, and not yet turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan, to the power of God, which was the very work Christ's ministers were sent of God to do.

2dly, *And he convinceth or reproveth the world of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more.* When their righteousness is only wrought in the wisdom of man, and not by the power of God, whether it be in preaching or worship, when only the form, and not the power, is witnessed, this then convinceth them that they have been building their religion upon a wrong bottom, and a sandy foundation; and sheweth the formal minister, that he is only a minister of the letter and not of the spirit; and the formal worshipper, that he is not yet come to worship in spirit and in truth; and the professor of Christ in words, that he denieth him in works and inward faith; because *faith without works is dead*, as works without this spiritual faith is dead also.

"Because I go to the Father," is the wonderful cause given by Christ, for it is Christ's righteousness that must save the soul, and Christ being gone to the Father, the soul must go there to him, for all his gifts and favours, mercies and blessings, and must witness him in spirit to be with them, and in them, as he is in the Father. When Christ was personally on earth, he taught us by words vocally express'd; but "henceforth know we him so no more." Now he teacheth us by his spirit, light, and life, which convinceth of form without power, and letter without spirit, and religion without life, and righteousness without grace, and light and imputative righteousness, without actual righteousness, and actual or formal righteousness in our own wills (only) all

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this and much more, it convinceth us not to be effectual to salvation, and sheweth us that the spiritual power, and presence of Christ, is absolutely necessary for the work of the ministry, and the conversion of souls.

3dly, *He convinceth the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.* He the comforter, the spirit of truth, when he is come, sheweth us our wrong judgment, and convinceth us of the evil of being too censorious, rash and uncharitable, in judging, and plainly giveth us to understand, that such judgment is from the prince of this world, who is king over all the children of pride, and that this prince or evil spirit, is judged by the righteous and just judge of heaven and earth, Christ Jesus. He also convinceth us of the everlasting truth, as it is in Jesus, and is our sure Comforter while we keep therein, in doctrine, worship, and conversation.

4thly, *He shall bring all things (or those things) to your remembrance, which I have spoken unto you,* John xiv. 26. Wherefore this gift is absolutely necessary for a minister of Christ; and every true believer in him, wants this remembrancer, must needs be a greater comfort to us, to have his excellent speeches and divine doctrine brought by his own spirit to our remembrance, if we do love him in sincerity.

5thly, *He shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you,* John xvi. 14. says Christ. Take of his light, his life, his grace, his wisdom, his mercy, peace, and truth, and shew it unto you. Oh infinite love from a tender Saviour! well may we admire his goodness, and intirely love him above all things in this world.

6thly, Christ speaks in divers places, concerning this wonderful and extraordinary gift of the Holy Ghost or spirit, and in the xiv. chapter, and 16th, and 17th verses of *John*, he thus drops his divine words,

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words, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Oh! ye ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, in this his gift is your strength, your comfort, and your exceeding great reward, both here and hereafter, for ever; far exceeding silver or gold, or the diamonds of princes: the whole world wanting this lieth in wickedness, and must lie there unavoidably, if they have not the sense of this unspeakable gift: there cannot be salvation, nor any saving ministry without it; it being absolutely needful, to the being and well being of a minister of Christ: and indeed the holy text is plain, and positive, that *he that hath not the spirit of Christ, is none of his*; none of his minister, none of his believer: oh! no, they cannot be his in any good respect whatsoever, without his spirit. But if it should be objected, How shall we do to know the minister or the man who hath this divine gift, or spirit of Christ, since it may be pretended to both by ministers and people; and yet they may not have it in reality? This indeed is a great point, and highly necessary to be searched into, which is to be known by our Lord's rule, which he has prescribed for that end. *Do men (saith he) gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles?* (Surely no. The grape is gathered from the vine, and the fig from the fig-tree.) *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.* Now those (according to this true rule) who have the spirit or Holy Ghost, they bring forth the fruits of it: *Which fruits are love, charity, meekness, temperance, patience, experience, hope, faith and wisdom from above, which is pure and peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, to all, and every thing that is good.* And those who have the holy Spirit, bring forth the fruits of it as naturally,

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as the vine doth the grape, and the fig-tree the fig. Also, *Whatsoever things are holy; just, honest, pure, and of good report, or tends to piety, or virtue; in a word, every thing that is good, is the fruit of the Spirit of God and Christ: and they are brought forth with divine life and power in that minister and people, who through true faith in the blessed Jesus, have received the gift of the holy Ghost, or Spirit of Christ.*

The minister of the gospel being thus fitly furnished to every good word and work, he is ready to answer the call of his great Lord and holy Master, which is in heaven; he wants not the call of man, nor authority from man, nor wages of man. But those who bring forth fruits contrary to the above, can neither be true ministers, nor christians according to the doctrine of our holy Lord. Being thus qualified by the most High, those ministers are freely given up to serve the Lord, and go wheresoever he is pleased to send them, though he send them as lambs among wolves: and it is worth noting, that Christ's messengers and ministers are called and sent of him; they do not run of themselves, nor in their own will; which if they did, their end would be like the forward false prophets of old, who did not profit the people at all.

Our great Lord seeing what need the world had of true teaching, and of true teachers, sends his ministers forth into it, saying, *Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. All power is given unto me in heaven and earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*

Many of his excellent sayings and commands may be found in that wonderful sermon which he preached on the mount, *Matt. viii, viii, and viii chap.*

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Here Christ shews his ministers his power, and sends them forth in his own name; for there is none other given under heaven for salvation; and Christ comforts his ministers with a glorious promise, of being with them to the end of the world. Oh the wonderful sweetness of this gracious promise! and such are all his promises, for they are yea, and amen, for ever. Wherefore Christ's ministers may well go forth without doubting, having their authority from the King of kings. Again he saith, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned,* Mark xvi. 15, 16. So Christ says, go; but the world, the flesh and the devil say, stay; for the spirit of sin and satan is for obstructing the work of Christ, and hindring the free gospel ministry, and the motions of the word and testimony of Jesus; and is for quenching it in those in whom it may appear: it is a new mode or fashion, contrary to the primitive order of Christ, above mentioned, for ministers to stay, and be tied to an outward Benefit, or a particular meeting or congregation; which way of preaching, or reading (reading being much in practice now a days) is quite contrary to the call, and practice of Christ and his ministers, and of the martyrs, and confessors of Jesus: as also of many of the most noted reformers in religion. Oh but it is objected, if ministers should alway go about among the nations, what would become of their families, or how must they live and be maintained? To which may be answered, as the ministers of our Lord were, when he at first sent them forth; who, when they returned to their master, he asked them, *If they lacked any thing?* They answered, No. But instead of lacking any thing, the devils were subject to them. Pray let the serious christian consider, here is now a wonderful change. Is it in Christ, or in the hiring

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ling money-loving priest? It is certainly in the men, and not in Christ Jesus; for he is the same to day, yesterday, and for ever. Where the power of Christ rules; there the devil and his power must of necessity be subject.

But some object, that people are not so free now a days; were there not a law to maintain ministers, the ministers might perish or starve in this generation; if so, then their ministry must starve the peoples souls. But this thought of starving, is for want of the gift of God, and power of Christ; which power in the ministry would wonderfully open peoples hearts towards God, and those who are his true servants and ministers; who said, *Freely ye have received, freely give.* Oh! faithless generation, what shall we mistrust him who provides for all his creatures, even to the ravens and sparrows, and will he not much more provide for his servants and ministers? How should we receive power from on high, if we want faith, and cannot depend on the providential hand of God?

Christ sends his ministers into the world, in order to propagate his gospel of salvation, and to let the world know that he is come to put an end to sin, and bring life and peace to the soul, according to the angels testimony of him, that *his name should be called Jesus* (which is a Saviour) *for he shall save his people from their sins*, Matt. i. 21. The apostles of Christ also, according to their holy commission, declared, that "God had sent his son to bless us, in turning of us from the evil of our ways; Acts iii. 26." But that doctrine must certainly be opposite to this of the angels, Christ, and his disciples, which teacheth that we must live in sin while on this side the grave, and that there is no being free from it while we are in this world; though Christ himself came for that very end and purpose; to put an end to it, and to save us from it, and to bring unto, and into, the world, everlasting righteousness; as also is that

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doctrine which maintains, that there is no perfection that we can attain to in this life ; though Christ says, *Be ye perfect* (for or) *as your father which is in heaven is perfect* ; as he is perfect in fulness, so are we to be perfect, according to the measure of grace received. This faith and belief is much wanting in this unbelieving generation, which is the reason that people remain in their sins, and the peoples leaders cause them to err, and their ministers minister in their sin, and minister sin to the people. Oh ! that the great Lord of all, may grant the faith which purifies the heart unto the children of men, and especially to his ministers, that they might be instrumental to the convincing and converting souls to Christ, and his "gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, to all them that believe." And as without believing, and being baptized, we can neither be saved, nor truly preach the gospel ; How do we believe in Christ if we remain in our sins ? For Christ saith, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins* : so it is plain, that the true faith and belief in Christ taketh away our sins, and that if we remain in our sins, it is evident that we have not the true faith of Christ. It is not enough to have a notional or historical faith or belief that Christ is the Son of God, but we must also believe that *this is he*, that as the angel declared to Joseph, *should save his people from their sins*. This was before he was born of the holy virgin ; and those people mightily mistake the doctrine of Christ in the holy scriptures, who think or believe they shall be saved in their sins ; and those ministers must needs be antichristian, who preach and write, that there can be no living here in this world without sin, which is also contrary to their own doctrine at other times, and to their solemn covenant in water baptism (or sprinkling) in which they promise for their children, "to forsake the devil, and all his works," (and without doubt)

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all his works is sin, no christian can pretend to greater or higher perfection, than to forsake the devil, and all his works) *the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lust of the flesh, and to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our lives*; so that according to this solemn covenant, here is no day for sin; yet those covenanters at other times will say, preach, dispute, and write, that the best saints cannot live without sin, and that people sin in their best duties; if any think to mock the Almighty after that manner, they will be much mistaken in the day of the righteous judgment of God: for *Christ came to put an end to sin, and to finish transgression, and to destroy the works of the devil, which all sin most certainly is.* And it is plain, that *John, the beloved disciple of Christ, believed this, from his own words, I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one, 1st epistle of John, ii. 13, 14.* To which I shall add, what he saith through the spirit to the seven churches in *Asia.*

To the church of *Ephesus*, Rev. ii. 7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches, To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

To the church of *Smyrna*, Rev. ii. 11. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches, He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.*

To the church of *Pergamus*, Rev. ii. 17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches, To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth, save him that receiveth it.*

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To the church of Thyatira, Rev. ii. 26, 27, 28, 29. He that overcometh and keepeth my word unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessel of the potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father; and I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.

To the church of Sardis, Rev. iii. 5, 6. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches.

To the church of Philadelphia, Rev. iii. 12, 13. He that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches.

To the church of Laodicea, Rev. iii. 21, 22. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches.

Surely that soul who cannot by all this see that there is an overcoming, must certainly be blind as to a spiritual sight of the doctrine of Christ; and what is it but to make Christ and the holy Spirit a deceiver, to promise all those great things to his churches, if they cannot perform the conditions he prescribes; and if it were true (as it is not) that it is impossible to overcome sin and satan, then would Christ be a hard master, which is absurd and wicked to suggest. But this overcoming must not be in our own wills, nor in our own time, nor with our

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own weapons, but according to the apostle Paul's testimony of the saints weapons, and their warfare, and also of his own fight and victory, viz. 2 Cor. xi. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down strong holds (satan's holds of sin are strong ones, if never to be overcome.)*

But with these weapons we may overcome: and he bids the christian put them on, and calls them the whole armour of light (opposite and contrary to satan's dark power) and he names them after this manner: *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the sword of God, Eph. vi. 17, 18.*

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; which God the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them, who love his appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Thus the saints and primitive christians were victorious in this christian and spiritual warfare, and they encouraged others to follow them, as they did Christ. The very belief of this doctrine, that we can never overcome sin and satan, is contrary to the faith of Christ, and is a mighty engine of the wicked one to destroy souls; for what encouragement can any have to the work of reformation, or to believe in the new-birth, or that they may or can be reformed, or created again a-new in Christ Jesus, unto good works, and that they must not walk after the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Oh that ministers and people would consider that awful sentence of holy scripture, viz. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, mortify the deeds*
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of the body, ye shall live, Rom. viii. 13. The want of a lively hope and faith in Christ, the great Lord of heaven and earth, is great, very great indeed. Oh that true faith in him might abound and increase in the earth more and more! then would he inspire the soul with inward strength and grace to resist the devil, and overcome him, and actually to do works of God, and to forsake the devil, and all his works, and then, and not until then, is Christ's righteousness imputed unto us; so that true christians are truly righteous, not only by imputation, but by action also. Oh that those who make profession of Holy Jesus would deny themselves, and take up their daily cross, and follow him in the regeneration! otherwise, how can they be his disciples or ministers? And then would true christianity flourish in the earth; then would Christ be exalted over all, who with the Father and holy spirit, is God blessed for ever.

Now to return a little to Christ's baptism, viz. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* Here our great Baptizer, and chief Minister, is positive, that they shall be saved who are baptized with his baptism; from which, with strong reason, we may conclude, that the baptism which is absolutely necessary to salvation is not water-baptism, which was *John's*, but spiritual-baptism, which is *Christ's*; and for this reason also, that most christians that have any spiritual understanding, do plainly see, that notwithstanding people being baptized, or sprinkled, with elementary water, many live wicked ungodly lives, and die in that state; but quite the contrary effect hath that baptism which is of the holy Ghost, and spiritual fire, which is *Christ's baptism*; for that where it is witnessed, and where people not only talk of it, but live according to his holy operation on the soul, it saveth and cleanseth from sin
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and evil, it washeth by regeneration, and reneweth the soul by grace, with divine life and power.

The call of a true minister, is from and by Christ, he must come to the school of Christ, and take his degrees there; in the university love of God he must learn and experience patience, humility, faith, hope and charity; *Learn of me*, saith he, *for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Mat. xi. 29. and yet notwithstanding, he was the heir of all things, and all power in heaven and earth was given unto him, he humbled himself to the death of the cross, for the sake of mankind; and as the living Father sent his Son, so the Son sends his servants contrary to the will of man, as the apostle Paul said, *But I certify unto you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man; for I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*, Gal. i. 11, 12. Hereby it is plain he thought there was no absolute necessity of outward learning, nor outward call by man.

And as there is no absolute necessity of outward learning to make a minister of Christ, so there is no need to force an outward maintenance; for Christ will take care of his servants, and feed and clothe them, when he sends them as he did his disciples, who went forth *without staff or scrip*, yet acknowledged, after their return, *they lacked nothing*. And as Christ said, *Freely ye have received, freely give*; so there is no outward compulsion or force in Christ's doctrine or religion: some are indeed of another opinion, and have practised the contrary, and bring those words of Christ to uphold them in the practice of forcing religion, where he says, in the parable of the marriage supper, *Go, compel them to come in*; which was no other compulsion or force but that of love, which is the greatest power in heaven or earth; to construe our Saviour's words in any other

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other sense, would be absurd and contrary to the whole tenor of his doctrine and glorious ministry.

Thus then the work of Christ's ministers is to bring the people to Christ, as he is their Redeemer and Saviour from sin, and as he is their Comforter, and good Remembrancer, and their spiritual Guide into all truth, in the performance of which work, they will have their reward in this world, and in the world to come everlasting life. *Amen.*

A. D. 1720.

Concerning personal election and reprobation.

A Concern came upon me, in christian love to the honest-hearted of the *Presbyterian* way, to shew unto them how their teachers have misled them, and misrepresented the words of God, in their pretending to prove the doctrine they hold of personal election and reprobation, and in their wrestling the scriptures in support of it.

Some of the texts of scripture whereby they vainly endeavour to defend it, and where-upon they chiefly found their tenet, are these, *viz.*

1st, *Concerning Jacob and Esau, Rom. ix. 13. Mal. i. 2. 3.*

2dly, *Concerning the Lord's hardening Pharaoh's heart, Exod. ix. 16. Rom. ix. 17.*

3dly, *He that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour, Isa. xxvii. 11.*

4thly, *Hath not the potter power, over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 21.*

5thly, *Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, Rom. ix. 18.*

1st, *Relating to Jacob and Esau, the case was thus: the Almighty shewed Rebecca (the mother of them both*

both) while the children were yet unborn, That the elder should serve the younger, Gen. xxv. 23. Rom. xi. 12. Not that the elder should be damned to eternity, and the younger only saved, as 'tis hoped will appear plain and clear in the sequel, and the contrary be plainly prov'd both from scripture and right reason. First then, These two (*Jacob and Esau*) were the sons of godly *Isaac*, to whom, with faithful *Abraham*, was the promise of God, and to their seed, Gen. xvii. 18. and both *Jacob* and *Esau* were blessed in the name of God, and in his faith also: for (saith the author to the *Hebrews*) *Isaac* blessed *Jacob* and *Esau* by faith, chap. xi. 20. This he wrote when he was illustrating the invincible and mighty power of faith, by the many wonderful works that had been done thereby; and doubtless the faith there spoken of, is the true faith; and whatever is foretold in and through true faith will most certainly be fulfilled, as this great and significant blessing of *Isaac* to his sons was: the good old man, calls his eldest son to him, being disposed to bless him, and bids him seek venison, and make him savory meat, Gen. xxvii. 3, 4. (such as he knew his father loved) that my soul may bless thee before I die; and *Rebecca* their mother knowing (from what God had shewed her before they were born) that the elder should serve the younger, Gen. xxv. 23. for whom she had also the greatest love: she calls *Jacob* and opens the matter to him, and bids him get savory meat for his father, Gen. xxvii. 14, 17, 18. which through her importunity, he did, and after he had prepared it, he brought it to his father before his brother came, and his father blessed him in faith, ver. 28; but he did it against his natural inclination; for he would have had his son *Esau* to have had the blessing of preference, ver. 24, 25. because he was the eldest son, and by nature it was his birth-right; but he, in his prophane state and condition, had despised and sold it for a thing of little

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little value to his brother *Jacob*; so that *Jacob*, having, by his brother's consent, bought it of him, had a right to it on a double account, both by promise and purchase. 1st, By the promise of God before he was born: and, 2^{dly}, By purchase of his brother. But pray let it be observed, that this was the blessing of preference only, that blessing which *Esau* sought with tears, but could not find it; nevertheless he had a blessing pronounced to him by his father, through faith, chap. xxvii. 39. though he does not seem to have had a right sense thereof, for he was at times in a prophane spirit, *Heb.* xii. 16, 17. and in enmity and malice against his brother *Jacob*, as appears by that murdering, persecuting mind, that then was unmortified in him; For, says he, *the days of mourning for my father are at hand, and then I will slay my brother Jacob*, *Gen.* xxvii. 41. But then, as his wickedness was great, his conversion must be by so much the more glorious. It would be well if all murdering persecutors would (in this his conversion) take him for an example; for instead of killing his brother *Jacob*, when he met him on his return to his father's house (from whence he had fled) he fell on his neck, and kissed him, and wept, *Gen.* xxxiii. 4.

It is hoped that no christian ear will be offended to hear of the conversion and great change of this prophane person, who, though he was not favoured with the blessing of preference, or the natural blessing of birth-right (which he sought with tears, and could not find, *Gen.* xxvii. 38.) yet the blessing of God's grace and favour (being the free gift of the Almighty to him) with the fatness of the earth, he had, and it was delivered to him by his father by faith, as saith the apostle, in the fore cited epistle to the *Hebrews*, chap. xi. 30.

Which blessing was by their father *Isaac* thus expressed to each of them. 1st, to *Jacob*, that *the pur-*

pose of God according to election might stand, Rom. ix. 11, 12. which choice, or election, before they were born, or had done good or evil, was, that the elder should serve the younger, or the younger be preferred before the elder; not that one should be damned, and the other saved; there is no damnation to eternity that we read of concerning *Esau*, but a choice blessing of God, of a quite different nature. Unto *Jacob* he said thus; God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine, be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down unto thee, &c. Gen. xxvii. 28. 29. And, 2dly, Unto *Esau* he says (exceedingly trembling) ver. 33. Behold thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above, and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck, verses 39, 40.

These blessings have not only respect to their own proper persons, but also to their posterity; but far from pre-ordaining them, or any of them to damnation; and we have good ground to believe, from (what is above, together with) the reformation wrought in *Esau* himself, much better things of him; for it is written, *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness which he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive*, Ezek. xviii. 27. So when a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, for his iniquity which he hath done shall he die, verse 26.

Having thus far taken notice of the purport of the blessings of *Jacob* and *Esau*, relating to their persons; who were both blessed with the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, I would add this remark, "Let none curse him or them whom God had blessed."

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And whereas the apostle, reciting the words of the prophet *Malachi*, saith, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, Rom. ix. 13. This was not said of them before they were born, or had done either good or evil; but was justly denounced by the Almighty for the cruelty and hatred of the children of *Esau* to the children of *Israel*, as is fully and clearly expressed by the prophets, *David*, *Ezekiel*, *Amos*, and *Obediah*; *Psalms* cxxxvii. 7. *Ezekiel* xxv. 15. xxxv. 1, 15. xxxvi. 5. *Amos* i. 11, 12. *Obediah* 10, 16. and was written many ages after.

Secondly, The next text under consideration is, "That the Lord hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*," *Exod.* vii. 13. But it should be observed, he had first hardened himself against God and his people, and then God hardened him yet harder, in order to shew his great power to mortals, which well consisted with his justice to the wicked and unmerciful; for as God is merciful to the righteous, so he is just in his judgment to the ungodly.

So that God was clear of that evil heart of unbelief in him, and it is but just and reasonable, that when man, having been often visited, refuseth the offers of God's love, that he should visit such in and with his righteous judgment (who have slighted his mercy and grace) and then according to holy scripture, "his destruction is of himself, but his help is in the Lord," *Hos.* xiii. 9. So that "God is true, and every man, contradicting him, is a liar," *Rom.* iii. 4.

Wherefore may all have a care of hardening of their hearts as *Pharaoh* did, for that is provoking to the Almighty, and then he justly gives them over to an evil heart of unbelief, and to a reprobate mind, and so they depart from the living God. The Lord said unto *Pharaoh*, *Let my people go*, over and over, and it was the mind of God he should have done it: without those men who hold

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the contrary, would make the Almighty such an one as themselves, to say one thing, and mean another. What is that but to charge the Almighty with hypocrisy? A thing hated of him, and his dear Son, Christ Jesus. No, no, *Pharaoh* might have obeyed the Lord in a day of visitation: but he refused, and said, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, *Exod. v. 2.* And he continued to harden himself against God, and his people, cruelly persecuting them, and forcing them to make brick without straw, before we read that the Lord hardened his heart. Oh! that all hard-hearted, persecuting, unbelieving people, might take warning by him in time, before it be too late.

It is clear, he might have let the people go; because God by *Moses* commanded him so to do. And who can deny, that what God did, was more proper to soften than to harden his heart, by letting him see the miracles wrought in his name, and the ceasing of the plagues he had inflicted; therefore it was possible for him to have done what God required of him; he was not predestinated to that obduration, until he had hardened his own heart; and then it was, is, and always will be, just with God to suffer his, or any other man's heart to become hardened, and give them up to a reprobate mind, *Rom. i. 29.*

Thirdly, The following scripture is wrested, and falsely made use of, viz. *Isa. xxvii. 11. He that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.* This text hath, in some of the writings of those that espouse the aforesaid doctrine, been brought to vindicate that despairing, destructive, evil principle, of pre-ordination of particular persons to destruction and damnation: but this text, with the rest brought for that end, is grossly perverted; for in the same place the case is fairly stated, and the reason clearly shewn, why God

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God will shew them no favour, viz. "Because they were withered branches, and people of no understanding; therefore he that made them, would not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them, would shew them no favour." From whence it appears, they might have been fruitful, but would not, and had been green, but were withered from their greenness; much like those who Christ expostulates with, when he says, *How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not, Mat. xxiii. 37. If thou hadst known in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes, Luke xix. 42.* Which shews the great and fervent desire of Christ to save souls, and his tender love to poor mortals, and that they had a day of visitation, in which they might have been gathered, which is far from ordaining them to destruction from all eternity.

So that God is fully clear of all men, and their blood is on their own heads, and their destruction is of themselves; whereas they might have help in the Lord, and his Christ, through faith, which he offers to man freely; but man will not receive or embrace it. And further it should be observed, that if the whole texts of the prophecy of *Isaiab* in his 37th chapter be considered, it will plainly appear, that he is so far from uttering an express or positive decree of their final destruction, that he clearly and fully foretels their recovery and restoration out of that state.

Fourthly, They argue from the words of the apostle, *Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? Rom. ix. 21.* Yes, doubtless he hath; but the potter doth not make vessels with design to destroy or to break them to pieces, but for use and service; and it is contrary to his will and interest, when

when any vessel marrs under his hand. And it is very plainly expressed by the prophet *Jeremiah*, after mentioning his beholding the work of the potter, in the 18th chapter, 6th, 7th, and 8th verses, *O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord? Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.* All which is contrary to the doctrine of an absolute unconditional predestination: the Lord in his wisdom, and to shew his power, doth make souls more or less honourable, as he pleaseth; but it is very plain, from scripture, and right reason, that he makes none with design to destroy them, or hath ordained any to eternal damnation. Though he hath ordained damnation for wicked and ungodly men, yet he never ordained that men should be wicked and ungodly.

Fifthly, they urge the apostle's words, but to as little purpose as the former, *Rom. ix. 18. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.* 'Tis true, that God hath abundantly shewn us in the holy scriptures on whom he will have mercy, *viz.* He hath mercy on the poor in spirit; the humble he teaches of his ways; the meek he guides in judgment; he clothes the meek with salvation; he hath the righteous in everlasting remembrance; he loveth them which love him; he saveth them who love his dear Son, and believe in him; he giveth to them eternal life, and Christ loveth them, and manifesteth himself unto them. And his beloved disciple *John* declared, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world,*

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1 John ii. 1, 2. And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews saith, *But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God, should taste death for every man, Heb. ii. 9. And all who believe in, and obey him, will partake of the benefit of his death and suffering; but the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands, Psalm ix. 16.*

Thus it was in my mind, and hath been for some years to shew to the Presbyterian, Independent, or Baptist people, or any other, who hold the doctrine of particular personal election or reprobation, the weakness of some of (what they call) their proofs, for this (as I take it) corrupt and dangerous doctrine of theirs, and the misapplication of those texts of scripture, which they advance to maintain their absurd notion, of souls being fore-ordained to damnation eternally, whether they do good or evil, and that it is so determin'd before we are born into the world. Oh! that those people might come to true repentance, and lay hold of the universal love of God to eternal life, through the living faith of Jesus Christ our Lord, in the tender bowels of whose love to all are those lines written, and in great love and goodwill they are invited to search the scriptures, and to see whether the whole scope of them do not shew the contrary to what they hold in relation to personal reprobation to destruction, fore-ordained before we are born, or have done good or evil; there not being one text to be found to prove that doctrine; but there are abundance which set forth the love, mercy, and goodness of God, to mankind; only two of which I shall add hereunto, viz. *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart,*
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Gen. v. 5, 6. *And Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord, and entered, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them. And God saw their works, that they returned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not, Jonah iii. 3, 4, 5, 10.* I heartily desire that these two texts may be duly considered, and weighed; therein the mercy, loving-kindness, and long forbearance of God, being so clearly and fully manifested, that I think may be sufficient to convince every unprejudiced mind of the error of believing in that principle of the absolute predestination of the Almighty of any part of mankind to destruction. T. C.

A LETTER to COTTON MATHER, in
New-England.

HAVING received a courteous letter from Cotton Mather, one of the greatest preachers among the people of New-England; he being in community with the national church there, and having preached a sermon concerning the power and excellency of Christ within, recommending people thereunto, and commending our society therein; but differing from us in some particulars, which particulars I was concerned to answer as followeth, viz.

Frankfort, the 20th of 3d. Mo. 1726.

Courteous friend, G. M.

T HINE, dated November 30, 1725, I received a few days ago, I having been visiting the people along the sea-shore in the Jerseys (in the love of Christ, hoping to bring some to him)

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among whom in a general way, the gospel which I had to preach in his name, found acceptance, for which I was truly thankful; and tho' I had no earthly consideration for so doing, yet I had that inward satisfaction, that I thought I would not exchange or part with it for the bishop of *Rome* or *Canterbury's* revenue: and at my return I received thy friendly letter, which I was glad of, and that mine to thee found that acceptance, so as to answer my request.

And whereas thou say'st thy aim and hope hath been to perswade us who call ourselves *friends* (we professing ourselves friends to all people) that our superior stress should be upon the grand point of *Christ within*: we having found, by experience, living and blessed experience, the great benefit and comfort of his most sweet and glorious presence, by the manifestation of his power, spirit and grace, in and to our souls, we cannot do otherwise than lay the greatest stress thereon, our benefit therein, and thereby being not easily expressed, so as to be understood by the carnal mind, or to those who are in a state of degeneration; *Christ within* was, is, and ever will be, the hope of the sanctified soul's glory, though a mystery hid from ages of unregenerate people, or from those who are in the reprobation; *Know ye not your own selves, that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates*, saith the apostle *Paul*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Col. i. 2.

From the above I would not be understood, as though I believed that Christ is no where but in his people; neither did I ever understand any of our friends so, though we have been often misrepresented on that head.

And as to the ceremony of the hat, and the plural language to single persons, I thus answer, that many of us left that way of salutation and speaking, thro' strong conviction, accompanied with these reasons;

1st, It being a respect we pay Almighty God, *He being our head, is honoured by uncovering our head* (as saith the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 4.) We think for that reason it is not right to uncover our heads to men; but that to give one another our hands, in an inward and hearty respect, is better.

2dly, We read in the holy scriptures, that *Mordecai* could not bow to *Haman* for conscience sake, *Ester* iii. 4. and I think it may safely be concluded, that he did not take off his hat, or uncover his head, though he was in danger to have suffered for it. And,

3dly, The three children of God walked in the presence of the great king of *Babylon* (and thole present with him) with their hats on; and they stood the king's fury, and the fire, though seven times hotter than usual, with their hats on, as there related in *Dan.* iii. 21.

I beseech thee, my good friend, to consider the tenor of the holy scriptures maturely, and then I hope thou wilt not think the hat, and the language of *thee* and *thou* to a single person, to be needless ceremonies and incumbrances, according to our principle and practice; I do not write thus to thee for contention, nor in a contentious spirit or mind, but in the innocent love of our dear Lord Jesus, and for edification, or if need be, for information.

Also, as to *thee* and *thou* to a single person, I answer, That the holy scripture (or the words of God therein recorded) is by all protestant professors of Christ, acknowledged a rule to us all, next to the holy spirit, from whence they came, or the holy Ghost, that our Saviour promised "should lead in to all truth, and abide with the true believers for ever;" and that God and Christ's spirit, doth not contradict the holy scriptures, which came and proceeded from thence: this general proposition we all agree to, if we rightly understand one another.

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Then, according to this rule, our plain language is right, otherwise I shall be obliged to thee to shew us wherein we err from that good rule. Now, the most High thought good to teach and use that language in the beginning to our first parents; so that it is our mother tongue, and it is the language of the bible, or holy scriptures, from *Genesis* to the *Revelations*. I suppose I need not tell thee, that *you* to a single person had its rise from pride and flattery; and thyself knoweth, that *you* to a single person, is neither good *English*, nor good grammar.

And if I am rightly informed, your forefathers, as well as ours made use of this plain scripture language of *thee* and *thou* to a single person, in their first separation from the common sinners of their times.

Though I thus apologize for the plain scripture language, yet in respect of faith or grace, and principles to be believed, which are absolutely necessary to salvation, I call these but small things; but we are not to despise the day of small things, if we are faithful in the little, or less, we have the promise of more or greater things, *Luke* xix. 17.

I pray thee excuse this long letter or epistle; for it seems to me but meet that we should render a reason for our disuse of those things used by some (of most societies) professing the christian faith.

And in respect of water-baptism, and the bread and wine: 1st, As to water-baptism, I have this to answer, the which I hope thou wilt charitably construe.

The first account that we have of it, is from *John the Baptist*, who first practised it, according to the account the evangelist gives concerning it, and he said, *I indeed baptize with water, but he (Christ) shall baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with fire*; plainly distinguishing between the two baptisms, and the two natures of them; adding, *I shall decrease, but he shall*

increase: He spoke not of their persons; but of their dispensations.

William Dell, a bright and learned man in his day (and, as I take it, when he flourished most in divine religion) wrote an excellent piece on the subject of baptism, which he pleased to peruse; it is very evangelical, and well worth reading; I shall take care to procure thee one of his books; I am the more concerned about this subject, because thou art positive about our coming to it, if we improve in wisdom; but I would hope to be in some measure instrumental to convince thee that there is no absolute need (in order to salvation) to go into or unto the water or element; but that it is absolutely necessary for us to go unto and into Christ, that being the way to be new creatures, as it is written, *He that is in Christ, is a new creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17.

Our dear Lord on this subject says, *John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the holy Ghost*: here our Saviour, as well as John, distinguisheth between the two dispensations: John's was indeed a glorious dispensation in its time; but Christ's far exceedeth it in glory, and is to endure for ever.

The apostle *Peter* remembered this doctrine of Christ, when the holy Spirit's baptism was come, *Then, says he, I remembered the word of the Lord, John baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the holy Ghost*, Acts xi. 16. The apostle *Paul*, the great apostle of the *Gentiles*, says, *He was not sent to baptize, but to preach the gospel*; which when truly preached, hath a spiritual baptizing power attending it; and if we come rightly to be baptized with the holy Spirit, and fire of the divine word, we shall witness a renovation, and the work of reformation and regeneration will go forward more and more, both without and within, in body and in spirit, for which every true christian and minister of Christ longs and prays with fervent desires; the apostle says

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(and pray be pleased to judge for what reason) *That the kingdom of heaven is not meat or drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17.* Oh! may the most High inspire thy soul when thou read'st these lines is my tender desire.

I know I am writing to one who in many things is far before me; so that I write in a fear, mixed with christian love; and if it meet with the same love in thee, that will cover a multitude of faults.

And as to the supper or ceremony of bread and wine (which is called a sacrament, which word we find not in the bible) we do not understand that our Lord laid it as an injunction on his followers to observe or practise to perpetuity; or that the observation thereof is absolutely necessary to salvation, and that his church should be in the practice of the elements of either water to dip in, or sprinkle with, or bread and wine to eat or drink, as a lasting ordinance, to be observed by his believers in an outward way for ever.

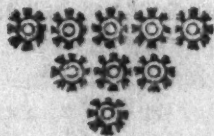
Christ said, *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*; which to me seems to leave it indifferently: also from the debates and contentions of christians about it, and the blood that hath been spilt and shed in this controversy, and the many doubts arising concerning it, I think it is evident, that Christ was not positive that his followers should be bound to perpetuity therein; and where he says, *Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, or for many; and drink, this is my blood which is shed for many*; I believe it is not to be doubted but that he pointed at his flesh and blood, rather than the bread and wine (as in a figure) and that also he had an eye to his spiritual flesh and blood or body, as, where he says, *Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you*; the which every true christian should daily feed upon, and without which we have no divine life in
us;

us; and as himself also said, *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

And it is worthy of note, that much of his holy words, and heavenly doctrine, was spiritually to be understood; *My words*, says he, *are spirit and life*; a glorious speech to such as truly witness and understand it, which is much better felt by a true believing christian than expressed: oh may we so open our hearts to our beloved Jesus, that he may come in unto us, and that we may sup with him, and he with us, and that he may not only sup with us, but take up his abode with us, and we with him for ever; and not only in us twain, but in all those who truly love, believe in, and follow him throughout the world; so wisheth, and prayeth, in sincerity, thy real friend,

T. C.

P. S. I hope thou wilt excuse this long letter, thy *Vital Christianity* being instrumental towards this our corresponding together by way of epistle, which if it prove any way to thy satisfaction, I shall rejoice. In reading several of thy latter tracts, I have had love in my heart towards thee, which was yet more renewed in perusing thy *Vital Christianity*, and thy friendly letter to me.



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YOUTH persuaded to **OBEDIENCE**, **GRAVITY**, and **HONOUR**, to **GOD**, and their **PARENTS**. Also some **TOUCHES** upon the **LIFE** of **MAN** from the **CRADLE** to the **GRAVE**.

Honour thy father and thy Mother, that thy days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, Deut. v. 16. &c.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble, Job xiv. 1.

To the **READER**.

READER,

THIS little piece is the fruits of a few leisure hours which the author had at sea, he being under a solid concern for the present rising generation, that they may flourish and grow in piety and virtue; and that the days of their tranquility may increase, and be lengthened out in this world.

And also, chiefly, that when they go off the stage of life, they may have the enjoyment of the peace of God, and of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through the holy Ghost, with a full assurance of an eternal inheritance and habitation in the glorious kingdom of heaven.

The author hopes that religious and well-inclin'd parents will join with him in this so necessary and noble work of seeking the youth's welfare; and desires, as they may approve this labour of love, that they would be instrumental to disperse or bestow this among, or to, their children and neighbours, the charge being inconsiderable.

And if any are benefitted hereby, it will abundantly satisfy for the labour taken herein. And may the Lord of all blest thee and thine, in all good things, who is worthy to be loved, served and obeyed, by all mortals, to whom praise only is due for ever.

T. G.
YOUTH

YOUTH *persuaded to Obedience, Gratitude, and Honour to G O D, &c.*

ONE of the first things pious and good christians generally endeavour to instil into their children, in their youth, is, the true knowledge of God; and that he made them, and for what end.

The Almighty made us all on purpose for his glory, and that we should serve and worship him, as said the four and twenty elders who stand before the throne of God, and worship him continually, saying, *Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created,* Rev. iv. 8,----11.

Man being a noble (if not the noblest) piece of this visible creation, was doubtless made and created for a purpose of his glory.

But sin is of the devil, and did, and (if not repented of) always will dishonour God, and bring ruin upon both body and soul.

Therefore, O youth! be prevailed upon before it be too late, rightly to *remember thy Creator in thy youthful days, before the evil day come.* And certainly it will be an evil day to thy soul, when God by his Spirit leaves striving with thee, and leaves thee to thyself: for he hath said, *his spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh,* Gen. vi. 3.

While therefore God by his Spirit is striving with thee, and calling thee by his grace to repentance, and to turn from the evil of thy ways, saying, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Turn at my reproof, and I will pour out of my Spirit upon you, and make myself known unto you.* Again, *I stand at the door and knock* (here's a holy stroke at the heart) *if any man will hear my voice* (see the universal and unlimited love of God in Christ to poor mortals) *and open the door, I will come in to him,* Rev. iii. 20.

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If man will open the door of his heart to his Maker and Saviour, he will come unto, or into his soul. O soul! no guest in the world is like this heavenly guest; no companion, no friend in the world like this great, this choice friend, Almighty God. Oh! seek him while he is yet to be found, and call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts (that are evil) and return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him (and, as say the righteous, who seek the glory of God, and the good of souls) and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Isa. lv. 7.

Therefore, Turn, turn, O turn! Why will ye die? ye curious workmanship of God's holy hands, ye fine and beautiful young men and women?

The youth should also gratefully and obediently remember their careful fathers, and indulgent and tender mothers: unto such youths God has promised a reward, the which promise I have seen fulfilled in many thousands; and God is more and more fulfilling of it every day; and will fulfil it to the end of time.

And how reasonable is it that we should remember with tenderness, our father who begat us, and not to disobey him in his lawful commands, nor wittingly nor willingly vex or grieve him?

Pray how shall we be ever able to pay or to retaliate him for all his care, and the cost and charge he hath been at in bringing of us up, till we come to be young men and women? Can we ever do enough for him that hath done so much for us?

Oh! how unhandsome it is, as well as irreligious and unchristian, for a young man or woman, when their parents are old, and perhaps full of aches and pains, or otherwise in years and in bad health, to treat them with scorn and contempt, or to be surly and churlish, and flout at and disobey their wholesome counsel and advice.

On such young people I have seen the heavy hand of God in my day, and made observations thereof, many and many a time. O! the many disobedient youth that I have seen, that have been examples and warnings to others, of the just judgment of God Almighty, upon disobedient and prophane young people; and indeed too many old ones too.

But the youth are too apt to think and say, Our bones are full of marrow, and our veins of blood, and our blood is warm; we cannot be so dull and heavy as old men.

Well, who hath fill'd, and by whose providence are your bones and veins full of marrow and blood; Is it not God? Is it not in him you *live, move, and have your being*? What hath the devil and sin to do with all this? Should not God have the marrow of your days? And should not youth serve him with their purest or finest blood? And should they not be warm, and not lukewarm or cold, in and towards the things of God and heaven?

Thus to be vigorous and manly in the work of God, is truly and rightly to honour our parents, as God commands.

It is not to honour them with the mouth and lips only, but with the heart, and with serving God; for this is the honour spoken of in the holy scripture.

None can rightly honour their parents, who dishonour God. If a young man or woman is religious, and of a discreet conduct, and of a sober and just conversation: that indeed is a real honour to, and honouring of our parents. For, say people, when they behold just and religious youths, when their father is living, *Oh! how happy is that man in his children!* and indeed it is an honourable happiness: when, on the other hand (pity! oh! pity! pity!) how many fine youths, to look at (at a distance, to outward appearance) have, through their disobedience and vile practice, brought down the

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grey hairs of their careful and tender parents, with sorrow to the grave.

And, as if their own ruin and their parents was not enough, bring, through their intemperance and folly, ruin and destruction on their posterity also; and what their parents have with great labour gain'd to bring them up, and educate them till they come to maturity, they in a little time spend extravagantly and intemperately, as well as foolishly and inconsiderately; and so bring ruin and destruction swiftly on themselves and posterity.

And another subject but seldom spoken of, or handled, is the extraordinary regard we should have to oblige our mothers, and the tender care we should take to nourish and comfort them in age; and not vex or grieve them, if possible we could help it, for many reasons, besides our religious duty, as above, in relation of honour to parents. And let me remind the youths of this age, of either sex, that in the time of the law (the law of God under the *Mosaic*-al dispensation) the disobedient youths were to be brought out of the camp or city, and all the people were to stone them to death.

'Tis true, our gospel-dispensation, or the dispensation of our sweet Jesus, is not so rigorous; but much more mild and gentle, as to the body; yet, as to the soul, without repentance, the disobedient to natural parents in general (besides to our Father in heaven in particular) entail upon them an eternal curse in the world to come, and many crosses and difficulties in this world. And herein the gospel exceeds the law, it gives time for repentance, mixes mercy with judgment, and sanctifies our troubles, crosses and afflictions, to us, through repentance and amendment of life; whereas the law in old time was executed without mercy or pity, and with fierce wrath, vigour and anger.

But to return to the tender mother. Oh! the tender soul of the tender mother, how it yearns over the obedient son or daughter! and who that hath not a heart of flint or adamant, but would comply or yield to the wholesome advice and counsel of so tender a parent, who brought us into the world? Affection to such a near parent, one would think, should constrain us to it.

However, if religion or affection is not so predominant, let reason do it. *First*, 'Tis a rational consideration that thy mother suffered many pains, and much sickness, which thou wert the occasion of, even before thou wert brought forth into the world, besides the dolorous, bitter pangs and pains of childbirth, which have cost the life of many a tender mother.

And consider the first month after thou wert born, O the care and tender concern, the watching, labour and charge, cannot easily be express'd! what running to the physician upon every symptom or suspicion of being ill, or out of order? And must all this be forgotten? O height of ingratitude! which too many poor young people are guilty of.

Though blessed be the Almighty Lord, there are some who are truly and humbly thankful to God and their parents for their being, and their well-being, believing they can never fully requite him or their parents.

Now, after our first month, what a deal of fatigue and trouble we give our mothers, who still, if they give us suck (as many mothers do; even queens and princesses, and many noble women, not disdain to give their children suck from their own breast, which certainly is the most natural way of bringing up and nourishing them; though, on some considerations a nurse may be dispensed with) how do we partake of their own blood, to the wasting of their spirits, and oftentimes of their flesh also?

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Surely nothing but love and duty could engage a mother to the great care and fatigue which she is oblig'd to in nursing and suckling her children, especially if before-hand in the world? who can express the toil and care to keep the poor unthinking little ones quiet, and the many weary steps and contrivances to keep them from crying? Although, by the way, when they grow up, their mothers may cry night and day too, and they take but too little notice of it (*i. e.*) the rebellious, and ingrateful, and disobedient youth.

O youth! must all this be forgotten? Must all this have no consideration with you, and bear no due weight upon your minds! oh! surely no: God forbid!

The first year being gone (which is oftentimes but the beginning of sorrow to the parents) then they cannot easily be trusted alone, or out of sight, except in some good hand; and if 'tis never so little missing, then cries the mother, *Oh! where's the child? What have you done with my child? Who has got it?* And never rests till she's satisfy'd about it; and when 'tis brought to her, O how she embraces and kisses it, as if she would wrap its soul in her own! and then the heart, the bosom, and the breast, are all open to it. What endearing expressions are pour'd out to it from its tender mother! as *My dear, my love, my jewel*, &c. and sometimes from some sort of persons such fond expressions as are not justifiable.

But, O melancholy consideration! all this love and tenderness is too often rewarded with hard-heartedness and cruelty; the mother may cry, and die too, if she will, for her *dear love*, and *precious jewel*, when grown up to man or woman's estate! from such ingratitude may the Lord deliver us!

This consideration is remarkable, as we are also the workmanship of God, and human creatures, That of all the creatures God hath made, there is scarcely

scarcely any so helpless so long as man ; so that man is so much the more obliged to his parents, and particularly to mothers, who feed us when we can't feed ourselves, and carry us long before we can go alone, and defend us from harm, or we perish. After all this, to be unkind and disobedient to our parents is ingratitude ; and I scarce ever saw it go unpunish'd, even in this world : and pray let the youth consider how it is like to fare with them in the next ; for I address myself to those who believe the sacred writings of the holy scriptures ; for to others, some things herein may seem fabulous, as *judgment to come* doth to the *Atheist*, tho' divers of them feel it begin to come before they go out of the world, as hath been the case of many which might be mentioned.

From the breast, and the arms, to the seventh year of our age, who can relate the world of trouble our parents have with us to keep us out of harm's way, to keep us from bad company, to keep us in health as much as lays in their power, to cloath us, and keep us whole and clean, and take care that we learn no ill words or manners ; for about this time, little youths are very apt to learn good or evil ; and the careful, virtuous parents, would do well to endeavour to cultivate their tender minds, and to plant things good and profitable in them betimes. It often turns to good account (though not always) and when it doth not, the parents having done their duty are clear of their blood, and of what mischief may befall them through their ungodliness, and folly, and intemperance, afterwards.

From the seventh to the fourteenth year, then the care of wise and thoughtful parents is to give them suitable learning, and to seek for the best master that can be got for them, which indeed is a great point of prudence ; for corrupt and intemperate teachers are often hurtful to youth, and men of bad principles

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may be instruments of instilling the like principles into the children. A good understanding, good manners, and good principles, a religious, wise and discerning parent, would esteem before letters and figures; although to be well instructed in these also, is considerable, but the other preferable. And here let teachers and the youths be careful of idleness, for that is the mother of many mischiefs; and bad words, bad actions, and bad company, ought to be avoided, which taint and corrupt the minds of the little tender youths.

'Tis melancholy to think of it, that some youths, who never heard bad words in their father's house, such as taking the sacred name in vain, cursing, swearing, talking rudely, &c. should come from school full with it, so that the good intention of the parents in giving their youth schooling, is then circumvented in a great degree; to regulate which, the parents and tutors should join together in a wholesome discipline. Some indulgent parents mightily hurt their youth by tying up the hands of their teachers from discreet correction. No discreet teacher will use broom or mop-stick, or door or window-bars, to correct their youths; that would be unmanly, as well as unwise; but the rod never did hurt in a skilful hand. And both at home and at school, 'tis profitable for the youth to be diligent in reading the holy scriptures, which are preferable to all other books, though other good books are profitable also, and beneficial to improve the understanding: whereas filthy and irreligious corrupt romances and prophane play-books often poison, and are the bane or ruin of youth; and when once they come to be in love with those black dark works, sacred truths are of little value with them, which is an evident token or sign of the evil tendency of evil books: though there may be some sort of philosophy in some of them, yet, if 'tis vain, and lies
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and deceit, we had need to be careful our youth are not spoil'd therewith; and indeed those of riper years are often hurt thereby, else why did the learned apostle *Paul* write to the primitive christians, *to beware lest any of them should be spoil'd through (wrong) philosophy, and vain deceit*, Col. ii. 8. If all this care and pains, besides charge, should be forgotten it betokens great stupidity.

From fourteen to twenty-one, more care comes on a-fresh upon the heart and mind of the faithful and loving father, and affectionate and tender mother, that their offspring may do well, both as to this world, and also to that which is to come. It is indeed commendable, and also a duty in the parents, to take care in putting their children in a way, as much as lies in their power, to live in the world; but, above all things, to endeavour to promote their eternal happiness and interest in the life to come. This is so much the more honourable, by how much the one is external, and the other eternal. O eternity! eternity! that we did but think more proper upon it, tho' we thought less of the externals; altho' some think too little upon the substantial part of them too, and forget to be just in the things of *menem* and *tuum*, or between man and man.

But to return to the youth; and as to trade, the law of nations forbids them to trade, or to trade with them, till they arrive at the years of twenty-one, as supposing their understanding not fully ripe for business till that age; and therefore many, and some of the wisest heads on the earth, and men of vast estates, have thought it rational and proper for youth to be put apprentice for seven years: this is look'd upon as expedient, although they have many thousands to give them when they come to age: and indeed many youths have been ruined and undone for want of such service; and some of the brightest and finest of our young men have spent more before they

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they arriv'd to that age, than their parents had to begin the world withal; nay, some, many times more, for want of employ in some commendable calling; for having so much idle time on their hands, they have taken to idle company, and become idle companions themselves also; and so the youth have corrupted one another, to their great hurt and damage, as to their outward substance; and which is yet worse, as to their soul's welfare; and such *evil communication corrupts good manners*; and if they were employed in business, they in this respect would be out of harm's way, out of the way of those rooks that would make a prey of them.

In order to the well-doing and being of the youth in the time of his seven years servitude, we ought to be very careful to chuse such masters as are of good report: First, as to their religion, ingenuity, industry, justice and temperance, and one who hath acquir'd to a way of living well: such a master is worthy, and ought to be obey'd. It often happens, that before this time is over, the youth are uneasy, and are wont to go home to their parents, with complaints; but without a real occasion or necessity. It is far better, and much more honourable for young men to stay out their appointed time: and then when they come to have their lawful liberty, it will be more sweet to them; and people will be the more free and engaged to deal and trade with them, and the parents will have the greater encouragement to set them up in their calling. A common maxim, which is generally fulfilled, is worthy of note here (*i. e.*) *Those that are good for their masters, are good for themselves*, and it mostly happens so.

And as to masters, since they are generally gainers by the service and work of their servants, they ought to use them well, as to their accommodations, and not exact their labour to oppression, remembering we have all a Master, which is in heaven, and that e-

very one of us (let our condition be what it will in this world) must be accountable for the deeds done here on earth, to him in his kingdom.

It must not here be forgotten, that servants ought not to serve their masters with eye-service; but justly do their duty as tho' they were actually present, or really in view. And as their indentures bind against cards and dice, and all unlawful games, and gaming being very destructive to youth, as well as to their master's interest, it is in an especial manner to be avoided; for gaming leads into many other evils, and at the best, tends to draw the heart and mind from heavenly to earthly things. Also the servant is not to see his master any ways defrauded, it being all one in the foundation, whether the servant doth it himself, or sees (with approbation) another do it; and that which would make the time the pleasanter, and seem not so long and tedious, is to be chearful and good natured, and to be sure to frequent the publick worship of Almighty God; and masters would do well to let their servants go sometimes to more private duty; and if the servant be conscientious, the master will be no loser by such indulgence. Also servants ought to be kind to their masters children, which is reputable; and masters ought not to let their children insult their servants; and if the servants merit correction, let it be done prudently and not in a fury, or in the heat of passion; for such correction, in the heat of passion, oftner hardens the heart, than amends the manners of the youth so corrected.

Both the master and the servant ought strictly to observe and not to break their covenants which they have mutually agreed to in their indentures, sign'd and sealed before witnesses, or else they lose their title to justice, and as it is not prudent nor just, neither is it lawful so to do. It is a great happiness in a family when the master and mistress, men-servants and

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maid-servants, live together in love and good-will, and endeavour to promote each others interest: then when there is occasion to part, the good wishes of each other go along with these who go, and stay with those who stay. And the care of parents in this affair, is worthy the youths solid thought and consideration.

Thus after the fine and sprightly young man hath faithfully served his apprenticeship, and is arrived to the age of one and twenty years, when it is lawful for him and others to deal and trade one with another, then it may be suitable for him to marry according to the ordinance of God, and his early institution in paradise, who then said (and his word is the same to this day) *It is not good for man to be alone*, whatever others may say to the contrary. Oh! what pity and shame it is, that so many (otherwise) great wits, and fine flourishing young men, should plead and practise against lawful marriage, to their lasting reproach and infamy; and if they should have any posterity, it is a scandal on them also, tho' they are innocent; for through their parents faults, they are pointed at as illegitimate: and the inevitable consequences of such filthy mixtures, are monstrous confusion.

But let us hope and endeavour better for our present rising generation, and our hopeful and flourishing youths: and since the state of marriage is an exceeding happy state of life, if perform'd in the fear and love of God, and with consent of parents and parties concerned; and otherwise the reverse: therefore considering the bashfulness of some youths (and sometimes to a great fault) it might be well for the parents in time to propose marriage to their children, who sometimes have been lost for want of performing it in the fear and love of God; and indeed it being one of the greatest concerns in life, and being for life, a young man and a young woman

ought therefore to act therein with the greatest care and caution, as ought the parents also. And let the parents be helpful to their youth, according to their ability, and according to the industry of the youth, and still be helping them, which is an encouragement to ingenious and virtuous young people. By being too strait-handed, there may be a wishing for the death of the parents, saying, *They cannot carry it with them to their graves*; yet the parent is not to impoverish himself for his children; for that hath sometimes ruined both parents and children also.

The parents may propose, but the youth ought to chuse, because they must live and die by it; the chief motive of marriage ought to be pure and true love, which the parents cannot give to their children for each other; they may give them money, and give them advice, but they cannot give them love; and parents, by over-awing and over-perswading them, have brought ruin on many a beautiful son and daughter.

In this case of marriage, the choice (if we design to be happy for term of life) ought to be a virtuous person: that ought to be our chiefest aim. Our happiness doth not consist in either riches, or beauty; for *riches make themselves wings, and fly away*, Prov. xxiii. 5. And beauty is a fading flower: virtue is much more preferable and enduring; to have all these together in one person, is such a rarity as is hard to be found. And in this great case of marriage, it is an excellent thing to be equally match'd, or in the apostle's words, *equally yok'd*: not one of one persuasion in religion, and the other of another; not one very old, and the other very young: *First*, For where two of different persuasions marry, and have children, which way must the children steer their course? After the father, or the mother? And if the parents are both true to their contrary principles, who must prevail in relation to their chil-

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childrens way and worship? Many inconveniences, and much confusion, must naturally be the consequences of such marriages.

Those who marry on account of riches, are very often disappointed; for they very soon are on the wing; they'll fly away, sometimes in the flames, and sometimes they will steal away in the dark by theft; and sometimes they will swim away by water, or fly away with canvas wings, and never return; and sometimes by the intemperance and extravagances of the man or woman, are more profusely wasted. And here let it be noted, that to live comfortably in the world, there must be both in the man, and also in the woman, industry and frugality; for otherwise, if one hath a hundred thousand a year, it might all, and more than all, be spent in excess; and if the man be extravagant, the woman and her family must suffer; and likewise, if the woman is extravagant, and lives to excess, that man cannot thrive in the world; so that both must manage their affairs with frugality and industry; and then no doubt, but through the blessing of God, they may be very happy in one another, and in their outward affairs, and in Christ Jesus the Lord: but then the blessing of God must be sought chiefly, and above all.

Also the very old marrying with the very young, is mostly attended with inconveniency, as daily experience teaches; for too generally such matches are on the one side for riches; for where do we find a young man that marries a poor old woman, or a young woman that marries a poor old man? And how often have we heard young ones say, *They would never marry old ones any more?* And one may well suppose, they had not married those old ones they did, if it had not been for their riches; and many times providence has disappointed them in the enjoyment of what they so much sought for.

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We now suppose our blooming young man and woman well married and settled in the world, according to their own, and parents and relations liking and choice; and now according to the apprehension of themselves and others, they are in a happy state, and are really so in one another: Oh the love and endearments of such a pair, who can fully express it? It hath something of the resemblance of the state of our first parents in paradise; and happy, yea, thrice happy would they be, that make it their care and study to live so, and do live so until they die; and then when one of these happy entire lovers dies, it sometimes happens that the other cannot survive long, but shortly doth die too.

But as our parents in paradise, so we in this paradisaical state, have the same subtle, serpentine spirit to war withal; for satan envies us this happiness, and uses all his craft and subtilty to break the love and strict union between man and wife, and to turn it to hatred and bitterness; so that instead of dying for one another, they wish one another dead; and sometimes the innocent sufferer dies indeed, with sorrow and grief: and the survivor meets with one who pays off all former scores.

In order to circumvent our grand enemy, and keep to our first love as much as lies in our power, we must strictly avoid anger, jealousy, intemperance, wilful separation, and the one too much insisting in his or her will, against the other's, &c. But in cases dubious, or difficult the Author of all things hath given the decisive power to the male, because the *female was first in the transgression*; but it were better if these two had but one will, as they are one flesh, and that there were no other power between them two, but the sweet and cordial power of love; in that mortals (especially when it is in that which is divine) ever were, and still are, and always will be, happy.

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1. Anger ought as much as possible to be avoided, between a man and his wife. In a heat or rage, that may be done or said in an instant, which one or both may have occasion to repent of all their days; and when once done, it cannot be undone. Again, and as often as a man is angry with his wife, or a woman with her husband (without a sufficient cause) so often do they make work for repentance, and without which the fault cannot be done clean away. Let the angry person remember the good advice in the sacred record, *Let not the sun go down on thine anger*, Eph. iv. 26. And if it was not to go down on the anger of the common people, much more it ought not between a man and his wife. And let special care be taken, that both be not angry together; for that would be the way to fire the whole house presently, so that the house would be too hot to hold them.

2dly, Jealousy, Oh cruel jealousy! jealousy is cruel as the grave, and burns as a fire in the soul, and will certainly consume it, if it be kept alive. It ought indeed to be carefully watched against, and each person to avoid all actions that might give or have any umbrage that way. A free open disposition, would mightily help to quench the burning flames of jealousy. And love, sincere love, will mightily circumvent our fiery enemy, the *prince of evil flames*, who strives to stir up that (and not only that, but other) and all false fires whatsoever. If we would live in peace and love, let us put on charity; and that will lead us to put the best construction, and not the worst, on the words and actions one of another. This is a safe and good general rule for a man and his wife to observe; and not only for a man and his wife, but for all others on all occasions of difference. For what sad work would it make in the world, and who would escape from censure if the worst constructions were put on all their

their free words and discourses? Yet some may be censur'd deservedly notwithstanding. Oh! but this divine love is such a wonderful thing, it will quench the darts of the devil, and he cannot wound us while this prevails.

Worthy to be remembered is that great saying of the Son of God, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*, John xiii. 35. And this between a man and his wife, is doubtless highly necessary; and without it, they must be unhappy.

3dly, Intemperance is a sore evil in a married state (it is bad in any, and worse in that) for it not only destroys the peace of the family, but that by which (under providence) the family subsists and is supported; (*i. e.* the increase or regular income of it) and it also destroys the health, debauches the mind, quenches cordial love, hurts posterity, in causing weakly children, destroys credit and reputation, and hath brought many a family to poverty, ruin, and disgrace. Oh the misery! intemperance brings on people and families, in drinking especially, and also in eating and apparel, it is hard to be expressed in words. Oh! what cruel hardships it brings on persons and their families, and that especially of drinking to excess, which the male kind are most guilty of. How barbarous is it for a man to be carousing in a tavern till morning, and his wife weeping by herself at home, waiting for him? And when he comes in, sometimes in great disorder, and often in such fits, he is very mischievous, and commits much folly and outrage, of which he would be ashamed when sober. Surely, if man or woman were not wholly deprived of consideration, they would or should consider maturely and think solidly of the evil consequences of this great evil, and sin of intemperance.

4thly, Willful separation, between a man and his wife, is of dangerous consequence. That was very fatal

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fatal to our first parents, and seems to infect the posterity to this very day. Fair *Eve* leaving her dear *Adam*, cost her dear. She had not been so open to the intrigues of vile *fatan*, if she had had her *Adam* with her; and tho' the female is generally the weaker vessel, yet her strength is greatly augmented with the presence and company of her husband; and so is the husband in the same consideration. Daily experience teaches, that it is of ill consequence for women to go much abroad without their husbands, or young women, without somebody to protect and defend them, from the insults of rude persons, except on family or some other laudable concerns. Womens business being much in their own families, and mens also, to leave their wives long, without necessity, on account of business, is often hurtful to both. And men and their wives to sleep separately if in health (or by consent, without good reasons) is very unnatural, and often tends to lessen the love and affection they ought to have for each other.

It is good for married people to advise with each other about the affairs of their families, they being so nearly related; and to be subject to one another in things indifferent; and not strenuously to insist on their own wills, one against another; for that often breeds contempt and discontent, and mightily tends to lessen the love and affection, which they ought to have one for another. It would be well for married people to disclose their differences as little as may be, to any but themselves; and not to be contented or satisfied till they are made up again; always remembering their marriage-covenant, which is to be loving and faithful till death. Some married people have been heard to say, *That the longer they lived together, the more they lov'd one another.*

As the design of the Almighty in the beginning was, in his ordinance of marriage, that the man and

the woman should be help-meets to each other in divers relations: so it behoveth us to answer this great end and noble design, in his fear.

In our domestic affairs, we should draw together, and help one another; the woman in her household affairs at home, and the man in his necessary affairs abroad, seeking to God for a blessing upon their labours: and if accidents happen, or losses or crosses, by fire or water, by sea or land, the loving husband, and the tender wife, will help to comfort the most griev'd with soft and kind expressions; such as, *My dear, since it is our lot to meet such disappointments, and great losses, since we could not help it; and we are not become poor through idleness, or extravagancy, let's endeavour to bear it as patiently as we can; and let us comfort and cheer up one another: we do not know but all this may be for the best; and if the Almighty sees meet, he can give us more than we yet ever had. If not, let us endeavour to be content, and try to make it up in loving one another.*

And as to religion, a man and woman fearing God, may be very helpful to one another, they having many opportunities, to speak their experiences to each other; and times, wherein they may read the holy scriptures, and explain their sense, of particular passages and places to one another and the family, without interruption or fear of offence, or offending contending persons; and by stirring up one another to true religion, and the fear and worship of the most high God.

Thus living and continuing in the love and holy fear of God, and true faith of Christ, they have good ground to hope at last to die in his favour. Oh who would but hope to live and die like such a pair!

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FREE THOUGHTS communicated to FREE THINKERS: in order to promote thinking on the NAME and WORKS of GOD. With a RELATION of a remarkable providence, which fell out at Port-Royal, in Jamaica, suitable to the subject. Written at SEA.

(The Preface and Postscript by another hand)

The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God, Psalm
xiv. 1.

P R E F A C E.

THE author, in the course of his conversation, having met with some persons, who avowing the principles he opposes in the following tract, have been forward to assume the character of Free-thinkers, might have thereby been determin'd to such a title and direction of his work. And as it is to be fear'd, the number is too great of those who love a false liberty both in acting and speaking, it is not to be wonder'd at, should they endeavour to justify themselves therein by so special a pretence as that of freedom. A privilege so undeniable to every man, that without it, none could possibly be prais'd or condemn'd for any determination or action whatsoever; but it must be imputed to that power alone, which imposes a necessity towards either good or evil; so that in such case, all distinction of virtue and vice must cease in our apprehensions of morality, and human society lie in the greatest and most deplorable confusion for want of it. Far be it therefore from any judicious or honest person to endeavour to exclude or dissuade any from a just freedom in speculation or practice. But let those who pretend to this, entirely satisfy themselves, that they have fully and sincerely made use of it, and that in their en-

quiries they have faithfully collected, and impartially considered that evidence the nature of the subject might have required, or has afforded them. Those who deny an eternal Existence, Power and Providence, which hath created and preserv'd the world, seem neither to have observ'd nature, nor consulted that reason, which yet some of them may much pretend to follow. To such the following considerations are recommended by the author; which deserves to be read with attention and seriousness, for the good-will and sincere views with which they seem to have been written.

The Author to the Reader.

THE author having been much press'd in spirit to write the following considerations upon the present subject and occasion, begs they may be read with attention, and examined without prejudice. He hopes the learned and ingenious reader will excuse any faults in style or method, having respect to the sincerity of intention, which he professes to have had in his undertaking; and humbly prays that a divine blessing may attend it, to the satisfaction and eternal advantage of all whom it may concern.

Free Thoughts communicated, &c.

HAVING had some discourse with a young man of bright natural parts, concerning another world, and of leaping out of this into that in the dark, which must needs be very dangerous; and fearing that many take that great leap out of this world into the next in that manner, I have been induced to write these lines.

Upon

Upon which I cannot forbear immediately asking, What man in his senses will venture (naturally speaking) to leap in the dark, he knows not where? Or into a pit he knows not the bottom of? To think of it is terrifying, and must needs shock any considerate free-thinker.

Now, though a man, having a bright genius, and a large share of natural parts, may acquire much literal and natural knowledge; yet, for want of a spiritual understanding, which is derived from the divine spirit, he may greatly err concerning true faith and religion, and have no apprehension of the eternal kingdom and judgment of God or of another world; which it might be well for the ungodly were not, or were not to be at all: which, were it to be supposed, yet to live virtuously (as the bishop of *Sarum* observ'd to that great libertine the earl *Rochester*) would be an advantage to man, even in this world.

But if there should be an eternal, righteous kingdom (of which we may be internally and spiritually sensible) and a state of life therein to come; then, O then, what will become of the wicked, and all who forget God! and what perturbation of soul must attend such, when under the convictions thereof, they shall be ready to launch into eternity. I beseech thee (O soul) seriously to consider, before it be too late.

The great Saviour of the world says, *The kingdom of God is within you*, Luke xvii. 21. That is, inwardly and spiritually, to be known and perceiv'd. He also says, *I am the Light of the world*, John viii. 12. He, by his divine and supernatural Light, lights us through this dark world to his spiritual and glorious kingdom, where he rules and reigns in transcendent majesty and brightness; of which his faithful subjects are in some measure sensible: glory to the King of kings for ever.

And

234 *Free thoughts communicated to free thinkers.*

And that eminently wise apostle Paul says, *He was sent to turn men from darkness to light.* Darkness he calls the power of *satan*, and light the power of God. Now as a man walking in outward darkness is in continual danger of falling, not knowing whither he goeth: so also a man living and walking in spiritual darkness (which is the power of *satan*, where the wonderful power and works of God cannot be seen nor understood) must needs be in the greatest danger of falling into the bottomless pit of perdition, where horrible darkness and unutterable misery prevails for ever.

The many bitter cries, dreadful shrieks, and heavy groans, which my ears have heard from such dark souls, ready to depart the body, have been enough to convince me of the judgment of another world, tho' there had been no other demonstration of it to me. May our fine wits, and sprightly youths concern'd, repent in time. Oh, my heart is pain'd for them; and my soul mourns in secret for many of my former and latter acquaintance, as I have also tender desires for the well-doing, and well-being of mankind in general.

If any, by duly thinking of these things, should be awaken'd and convinced of their state, and their former lives and wicked practices; and have so much light as to see the danger of living without God in the world; but be ready to conclude, that if there be indeed a righteous God, who will reward every man according to his works, there can be no hope for them, such wretched sinners. Oh souls (if this be the case of any) look not at such thoughts, which (in the midst of your just apprehensions) *satan* taking the advantage, may thus suggest to you; who having got you deep already in the mire of sin, would by such infusions plunge you deeper both in sin and despair.

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Be it remembered that Christ died for sinners, *even the chief* (as *Paul* says) and he can make a chief sinner of a chief sinner, as appears in the case of that apostle by his own testimony : God hath, and can do it, tho' it be wonderful !

Wherefore abide not in darkness, but repent, and turn to the light of life ! strive and struggle for life, the life of God in the soul of man ! turn ye to the divine light, turn to God, who is light, and in him is no darkness at all ! live and walk in the light of God, which is far above the light of human reason ; therein shall we have fellowship with the Father of lights, and his Son Jesus Christ ; whose religion is spiritual : *God is a spirit, and they that worship him (aright) must worship him in spirit and truth.*

God must be worshipped in thought, word, and deed ; that is, in all things we ought to express an humble reverence and adoration to the Sovereign Being, frequently meditating on his great name ; but all evil and sinful thinking we must refrain from with abhorrence, as displeasing to him ; and is of the devil that evil spirit ; and which indeed is contrary to the nature and end of *free thinking* ; which is a sincere exercise of the rational faculty, in order to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood, that we may chuse and acknowledge the one, and avoid and reject the other. And here it may not be unfit to recommend the care of all thoughts, from whence proceed our words and actions as naturally, as good and evil fruit from the different seed sown in the earth.

And as the truest and most sublime end of thinking (which is the reasonable service of every intelligent creature) is the contemplation, fear, and adoration, of the Almighty Creator ; so are we thereto greatly encouraged by that scripture of *Mal. iii. 16, 17, 18.* which I am concern'd here to transcribe and recommend, and is as follows, *Then they that feared the*

the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it. and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.

In which scriptures we may observe how great and glorious a reward is promised to those that sanctify the name of the Lord; the consideration of which, must needs raise their love and admiration, and add to their present delight in such holy thoughts.

But, on the contrary, it is to be feared, that evil thinkers and actors, when the divine spirit and light would inspire them with good thoughts, or convince them of their sins, endeavour to stifle or overcome such thoughts or motions as would awaken them to righteousness; or restrain them from sin, and strive, by their natural wit, to reason the good spirit out of their souls; at the same time opening their hearts to the evil spirit and his suggestions, which they hug; to their own destruction. But indeed to judge rightly of these things; if a man have ever so much natural wit, and strength of reason, it must be sanctified through his faithful subjection to the divine will, and rais'd by divine inspiration; which as far surpasses human reason, as heaven is above the earth. May our men of bright natural thought think clearly and seriously of this. This is evident in the case of that great apostle *Paul*, who was educated at the feet of *Gamaliel*, in the perfect manner of the law, yet, by all his knowledge, could not justly distinguish concerning religion, but was a persecutor of the church of Christ: but when his knowledge and spirit came to be sanctified by the grace and Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, then, and not till then,

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then, he became of great and good use and service to his maker and mankind. Then his reason and religion became spiritual, 'who had not conferred "with flesh and blood, but had been obedient to the "heavenly vision, Gal. i. 16.' And he says (1 Cor. xv. 19.) *If in this life only we have hope in Christ; we are of all men most miserable.* So that his hope and expectation (as of all faithful believers) must have been of another life and the kingdom of God hereafter; for *here* (says he) *we have no continuing city, but seek the to come,* Heb. xiii. 14. And though the condition of such, in this life, is often exposed to much persecution and trouble for their faith's sake, towards the name of God, and testimony against this world, and the evil spirit ruling therein; yet, blessed be the Most High, he gives them strength, and the assurance of his favour, whereby they endure unto the end, as well as that he refreshes them with his outward blessings and comforts: so that they may well say with his ancient servant *Job, Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil?* Job ii. 10. Thus afflictions have been indeed usually call'd, but they often, in the hand of God, are means of redeeming the soul, and raising up many excellent virtues, when they are rightly submitted to.

But to return. I would enquire what subject we can possibly chuse so worthy of our meditation, or from whence so great benefit can redound both to spirit and body? The fear and thoughts of Almighty God, which are inspired by his grace, sanctifying our hearts, thereby render us more fit to receive his favours both to spirit and body, which he multiplies according to his wisdom and good pleasure; and all our faculties and passions being redeemed and governed by the spirit of faith, we shall possess and enjoy all things in a more regular and excellent manner. But who is there that hath not been so great a partaker of the many blessings, with which the infinite

Creator filleth the world, and in an especial manner encompasseth mankind, as not to be thereby obliged to a continual acknowledgment thereof, and remembrance of the great and bountiful Author? The state therefore of the wicked and rebellious, is stigmatiz'd in holy scripture, with this charracter in particular, that *God is not in all their thoughts*, Plal. x. 4. and indeed for this came his judgment upon the old world of the ungodly, who cannot be supposed ever to have thought of the adorable Lord, since every *imagination and thought of their hearts were only evil continually*, as the Almighty himself hath complained, Gen. vi. 5.

But instead of the returns of faith and love, how sad a consideration is it, that there should among men be found any so vile and foolish, as even to deny the divine Existence and the effects of his infinite power in the external creation, and to affirm that all things have come by nature, without God, or any supernatural power; which evil tenet, some have endeavoured to justify and support by natural reason: ("Wherein the name thereof may indeed be abused; but reason itself, which concludes nothing without evidence, can never declare in favour of a proposition, for which not only none can appear, but against which the whole world is full of it. But let this be disposed for the judgment of reason. When therefore it is said, That all things have come by nature; if thereby we are to understand that natural things are severally self-productive, this will be disproved by daily experience; for we may observe that they depend one upon another, and upon various causes for production and subsistence, without which, neither in a state of nature, could possibly be. But if it be meant of the universal system of natural things collectively, this will less be allowed of many, than of any particular of them; because that would destroy the nature of a self-productive

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ductive power, which cannot be limited from being infinite, and therefore can be but One : one infinite supreme Nature therefore only can have self-existed, and must have been the supernatural Author and Power, by whom all other beings have existed : which refutes the above error, and rationally proves and establishes the great truth in the question."

And this the christian religion teaches in the greatest perfection, that the Creator of all things is God, an infinite eternal Spirit, who filleth all things ; who having been pleased to manifest his eternal power and god-head in the visible frame of the universe, beareth witness of himself therein, by his providence and judgments ; and in every soul of man by his inward inspirations ; especially the sincere believer, in whom his spirit dwells and operates.

Oh ! that men therefore would lift up their minds, and open their hearts to him, when by his holy Spirit he reproves them for sin, and brings a damp upon their spirits for evil ; from which they would perhaps if they could, run, or divert themselves from the sense of it : but alas ! there is no fleeing from his presence, who is every where ; nor avoiding his judgment, whose kingdom comprehends all things : (but woe especially is to them with whom his spirit ceases striving !) holy *David* certainly was very sensible of this, when he wrote that admirable description of the divine Omnipresence, *Psalms* cxxxix. 7th verse to 12. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me, yea the darkness*

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hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day : the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. With these apprehensions of the infinite Power, and presence of the Almighty, I shall pass to the relation promised in the title page, which may here be properly inserted.

My author was *Jonathan Dickinson*, merchant in *Philadelphia*, who was present with the young men, whom this extraordinary providence beset, at *Port-royal*, in *Jamaica*; he gave me the following account. Two ingenious young men (who were lately arriv'd at *Jamaica* from *London*) discoursing about earthquakes, asserted that all things came by nature; and so argued thereupon, that it brought terror upon the company, who were many at dinner in an upper room: that whilst this lasted (to the astonishment of all present) the earth began to move and tremble, which put most of them to flight in such haste, that they ran one almost over another, some down stairs, others leaping over the balcony. But my author said, he considered that there was no running from divine Providence, and that the same hand which moved the earth, was able to preserve him; in which he trusted, and was preserv'd: (and not only then, but at other times, especially among the *Canibals* of *Florida*; as his book of *God's protecting providence*, &c. signally evinceth.) Thus, as he continued with the young men in the same room (oh! terrible to relate, and my heart and hand tremble in the writing thereof) the mighty hand of an offended God struck these young men with death, and they fell down, and never rose more, being in all appearance unprepared for so sudden a change. And how many other gay witty young people have been suddenly snatch'd away by death, tho' perhaps not so immediately, nor in so extraordinary a manner, seems worthy of reflection. The author of this account added, that he took up the young

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men, and laid them, one upon a bed, and the other upon a couch ; but that they never spake again after their blasphemy against God and his works. Upon which I think it very natural, as well as necessary, to remark, that this was indeed an eminent instance of the just judgment of God against such as deny his wonderful power and providence in the creation ; with this terrible circumstance, that these unhappy persons were cut off in the midst of their ungodly discourse and corrupt reasoning, without so much time afforded them as to ask pardon, and crave mercy of a provok'd Lord ; which is very dreadful to consider : and I especially recommend it to the serious reflections of all such as affect the name of *free thinkers* (as they are commonly distinguished) that they may no longer (under such a pretence) abuse their understandings with a latitude of profane and evil thinking ; who, as they must needs be sensible, they have not conferred the excellent faculty of reason upon themselves ; so they may as certainly conclude they never received it to exclude his existence, power and providence, out of the world, who gave it them ; nor to employ it to their own destruction, by such a perversion thereof, which must inevitably be the consequence, without timely and due repentance ; but that they may apply themselves to him for true wisdom, who is the eternal Fountain of it, who would direct all their thoughts aright therein, then would they find a substantial and enduring happiness and satisfaction, in the honourable thoughts and practice of true religion and virtue ; and that all vain and evil thoughts, directly tended to the misery and destruction of mankind.

Lastly, If any expression in this short tract should prove successful to promote, in any measure, the contemplation of the divine Being ; the consideration of man's duty to him, his Almighty Creator, or to convince but one soul of the error of his thoughts
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and ways; the author will think himself richly rewarded for his endeavours, and reverently ascribe the glory and praise to God, the prime Author and Mover of every good thing, who is worthy for ever.

The *POSTSCRIPT*.

IF we duly consider the nature of human understanding, as we shall necessarily be led to admire the wonderful Author of so excellent a gift to mankind, according to the power and extent thereof; so shall we be forced to acknowledge its imperfection, not only where the natures of things exceed its views, but also in tracing and explicating that evidence which many of them afford; but especially as to its influence in a moral respect, how subject is it to be obscur'd, and its faculties disabled by the violence of those passions and affections with which human nature is too ordinarily agitated? So that man cannot but want some extraordinary assistance; and lie under the greatest obligation to submit every faculty and affection to the direction and disposal of that infinite power and wisdom, which having so wonderfully constituted, can best preserve, and conduct him to a state of happiness.

Can it then be thought unrighteous in the supreme Disposer of all things, so to have fashioned our natures, and ranged them (though above many other beings, yet in such a state of dependance, as continually to express his sovereign power and rectitude? Since by our intire resignation to his divine hand, we may be transformed to a greater likeness of him, and have a spirit and nature superinduc'd of divine extraction from the Father of lights; whom to know and contemplate, through the revelation of his

his Son Jesus Christ (his infinite love to mankind) is eternal life and supreme happiness.

Which mystery far above human understanding, he hath been pleased to reveal by his spirit, who searcheth the deep things of God, in order to work in us faith in, and the highest admiration of that exalted name, by whom he hath visited our low estate, and would redeem it in him, into the greatest dignity that it is capable of. The particulars of whose incarnation, passion, resurrection and ascension into eternal glory, though highly admirable, and which the blessed apostle, who had been an eye-witness of his glory, says, *The angels desire to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. can none of them however be perverted to a sense of being repugnant to reason; because not impossible to infinite love, or infinite power; who could abase himself from his glory, and be made flesh in a virgin; could work all miracles, and the greatest of all, the raising himself from the dead; and could ascend up where he was before. All which are agreeable to right reason, and appear so with rapture to those that are enlightened and sanctified, especially with the evidence of the holy Spirit the Comforter, which confirmeth the humble believer in the saving faith and knowledge of these things to the end. And I am glad of this occasion to distinguish to thee (*ingenious reader*) that though no divine truths are contrary to natural reason; yet, as they far transcend it, they are not comprehensible by it, as other truths within the reach of its capacity are: as no nature below a man, nor qualified with reason as he is, can possibly know as he knows. Which observation is not of the least importance to us: for if it therefore follows, *that no man knows the things of God, but by the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 11. then can no man without the revelation of the same spirit, know the mystery of the divine power, by which he was created, and by
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which he must be eternally saved and blessed. Grace therefore [or the divine Spirit by its influence and inspiration] must be received and obeyed as an infallible oracle, if we would know and pursue those things which tend to our present and future happiness; as also the authority of the holy scriptures submitted to, as having proceeded from the same grace, of which they faithfully testify, and of that which is necessary to be by us believed and practised.

The excellency and necessity of which divine record to himself, man certainly must acknowledge, when he considers, that that alone has given him an account of his own origin [which, what man could have known?] And that he still may the better understand himself, of his lapse and corruption from that excellency and glory of his nature (in which he was created) by departing from the truth into a fable and notion of independency of nature, and sufficiency of wisdom without God. So that he is become as the beast which perish, as to the necessity of dissolution to his mortal part; and in his greatest natural honour, may in that respect, be compared to them; which is sufficient to humble him under the sense of his weak elementary state, with all the glory and advantages that may attend it.

But if man will not be convinced of the imperfection and vanity of his nature, by the infirmities and miseries to which it is continually subject; nor of the glory of the eternal Majesty, by the infinite wonders thereof, throughout the universe; rejecting the testimony of his own senses, of every created thing, and of the scriptures of truth; nor yet behold his glory in the appearance of the Saviour, which he reveals in every conscience; then must his blindness be concluded incurable, and his destruction unavoidable.

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